

High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

MAY 1956 • 60 CENTS

by John H. Newitt

THE ELECTROSTATIC LOUDSPEAKER

A New Column by R. D. Darrell

THE TAPE DECK

by Nathan Broder

BACH Orchestral and Chamber Music: a Discography

by Roland Gelatt

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The Rise of
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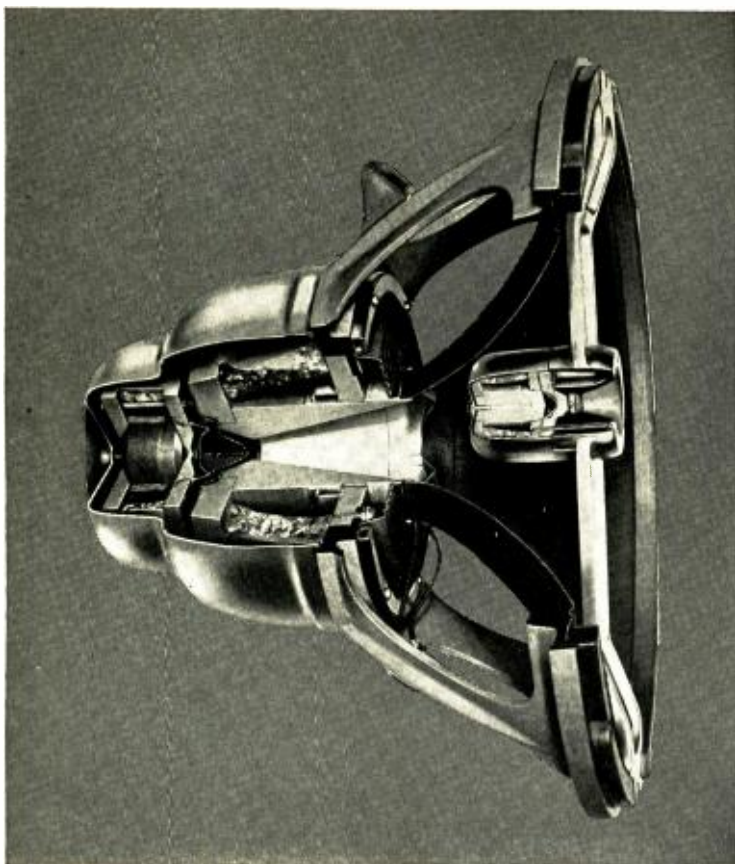
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High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

This Issue. We very nearly gave you a photo feature about a man who installed a modicum of fi in his Jaguar XK-140, but at the last minute decided that enough open air atmosphere was conveyed by the articles on Glyndebourne, Britain's delightful summer opera center, and on summer festivals throughout Europe. The Jaguar will be along later, when we also hope to offer an American festival survey. The surprising fact is that managers of European musical events are so much more businesslike, and so much better organized, than their American counterparts that the contrast is pathetic. As we went to press with this, only a few of the most ambitious summer music managements in the United States had more than the vaguest notions of their repertoire, artists, or even play-dates for the upcoming season. We dwell on this with such sour emphasis in the hope that it may be read by sundry Europeans whose contention it is that the leading American obsessions are with (1) dollars and (2) know-how. We wish these obsessions would begin to affect music festival managements here. For the nonce, however, we must concede a virtual monopoly to the Old World.

Next Issue. As sequel to John Newitt's discussion of American electrostatic loudspeakers in this issue, we offer next month an evaluation by Robert Charles Marsh of British developments in the same line. Hint: don't buy anything in a hurry.

CHARLES FOWLER, *Publisher*

JOHN M. CONLY, *Editor*

J. GORDON HOLT, *Technical Editor*

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Assistant Editors

MIRIAM D. MANNING; JOAN GRIFFITHS

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C. G. BURKE

R. D. DARRELL

JAMES HINTON, JR.

CORA R. HOOPES

ROBERT CHARLES MARSH

WARREN B. SYER, *Business Manager*

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Branch Offices (Advertising only): New York: Room 600, 6 East 39th Street. Telephone: Murray Hill 5-6332. Fred C. Michalove, Eastern Manager. - Chicago: John R. Rutherford and Associates, 230 East Ohio St., Chicago, Ill. Telephone: Whitehall 4-6715. - Los Angeles: 1052 West 6th Street. Telephone: Madison 6-1371. Edward Brand, West Coast Manager.

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AUTHORitatively Speaking

Anthony Richard Parker Wrathall, whose engaging description of Glyndebourne leads off this issue, will be remembered by some readers for a similar report on Bayreuth, printed in April of 1954. Lest it be supposed that he spends all his time gadding about to sundry opera festivals, however, it should be pointed out that he is employed by a leading London advertising agency. Nor that this keeps him in one place, exactly. Indeed, as you read this, he will be filling an assignment which single, personable, young advertising executives often dream of but seldom encounter—conducting a fashion show around the British Isles. We are inclined to regret that the content-limitations of this magazine preclude our offering to print a report on *that*. Wrathall is fond of the music of Delius, Walton, Bartók, Hindemith, and Wagner, not necessarily in that order, and can play the bagpipes, an accomplishment dating from his service in Germany with the Black Watch.

Joan Griffiths, whose round-up of summer music in Europe begins on page 40, is HIGH FIDELITY's newest editor. British-born, she spent her childhood in Canada, mostly Winnipeg and Toronto, and finished her schooling at Smith College. Thereafter she joined the Smith faculty, became, in due course, an assistant professor of English, and left to try freelance writing and editorial work in general. She avers that her apartment is graced by the lowest-fi music system of any H.F. staff member, a claim which will not survive the arrival, any day now, of a fifty (50) watt amplifier, flat from 10 to 68,000 cycles \pm 1 db.

A HIGH FIDELITY editor whose name will not be in evidence in these pages for some time, incidentally, is Roy H. Hoopes, Jr., who commences with this issue a leave of absence to work for the Democratic National Committee. His sole misgiving about this venture has been that his departure gives the Republicans in the editorial department a slight preponderance. One cannot, in this life, have everything.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, is where some of the nation's most advanced research in electro-acoustics is done, which is one reason John H. Newitt lives and works there. He is on the research staff at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, working in what M.I.T. probably has a long word for, but which we call high fidelity. He is best-known to audiophiles for his book *High Fidelity Techniques* (Rinehart, \$7.50), which always has seemed to us something of a model of two-level writing: it is technical enough to serve as a serviceman's manual, yet in parallel with the technicality is layman's description of extreme clarity. This, in conjunction with the fact that much of the original research on electrostatic loudspeakers has originated in Cambridge, led us to ask him to evaluate for us this new variety of transducer. He does so, admirably, we think, on page 42.

3

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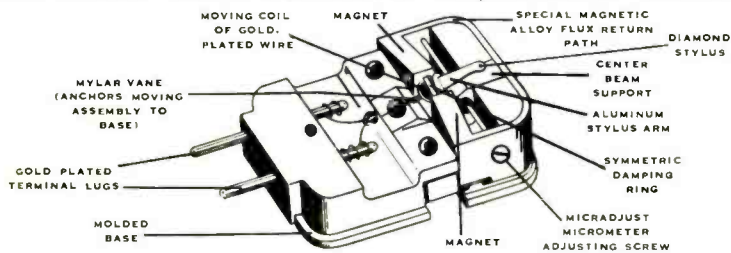
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Supraphon Records

We're very sorry to report that we apparently gave you incorrect information in our December NWI as to how you might purchase Supraphon records. We *still* don't know how much they are but we do know where you can buy them if you're interested: Messrs. A. Rohel, Import & Export, 3505 W. 26th St., Chicago, Ill.; Messrs. F. Pancner, Importers, 6514 W. Cermak Rd., Berwyn, Ill.; Messrs. Karel Vesely, Export & Import House, 3690 E. 139th St., Cleveland 20, Ohio.

We're a bit confused about the price, to say the least. Our December item was prompted by a letter from a subscriber. He wrote to us asking the price of and where he might purchase Supraphon records, some of which were reviewed in this magazine. We told him we had been unable to obtain the information he wanted from Supraphon (Artia) ourselves, having tried several times and having received no reply, but that perhaps he might be able to find out by writing directly to the Czech company himself. He did, and the information he got from them is the information we gave you in December: \$2.00 per 12-inch LP, plus \$1.00 postage and insurance.

We told you that there was no distributor of Supraphon records in the U. S. because we had been so informed by Supraphon.

So the latest from Supraphon is that their complete record repertory is available from the above named importers. We're sorry it took an erroneous NWI item to get the information from them, but at least we now have it.

Now It's Hi-Fi Pictures

Washington's high fidelity audio show in March sported an exhibit new to the industry. The I.F.A. Galleries, art dealers in that city, had a room

Continued on page 9

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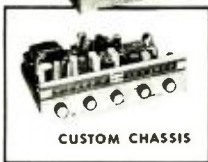
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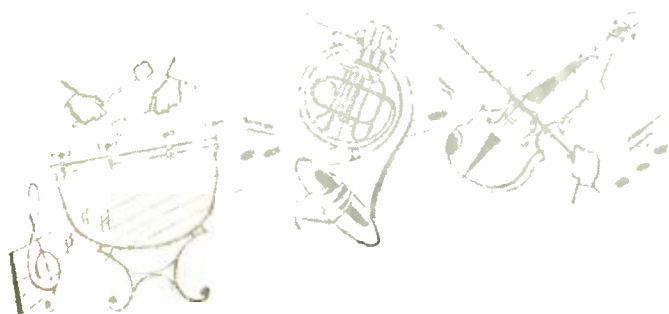
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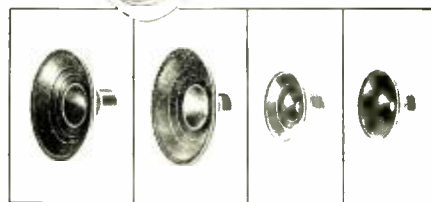


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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 7

in which they displayed fine reproductions side by side with poor reproductions of paintings by Vermeer, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and others. There were also fine reproductions to be compared with the originals from which the prints were made by I.F.A. Thus, high fidelity in print making.

A sidelight of this exhibit was a group devoted to proper framing of pictures, demonstrating, of course, that the wrong frame destroys the "fidelity," just as the wrong speaker produces distortions in the reproduction of music.

Pretty cute exhibit. And not the least of its attractions was the fact that it was silent.

Theater Organ Devotees

There's a publication called *Cinema-Theater Organ Digest* which may interest you. We are told that it is "chuck full of technical data on theatre organ make-up" and theater organ memorabilia. For full information write Alden E. Miller, Editor, Minnehaha Station, P. O. Box 5035, Minneapolis 6, Minn.

Mirth Department

The Mozart Year culminated for a record clerk at Macy's San Francisco store on the day a lady walked in and asked for Mozart's *I'm Inclined to Knock Music*.

And our Book Department had its day made when it received a neatly typed order from a Dutch subscriber for one copy of the *High Fidelity Record Animal*, 1955.

Louisville Philharmonic Society

Nearly every month, in our Record Review Section, you will see a record reviewed which bears the label, LOUISVILLE. Quite often the composers are people you've never heard of, let alone being familiar with their music. Most of our old subscribers are familiar with this series of records but some new subscribers may not know what the series is.

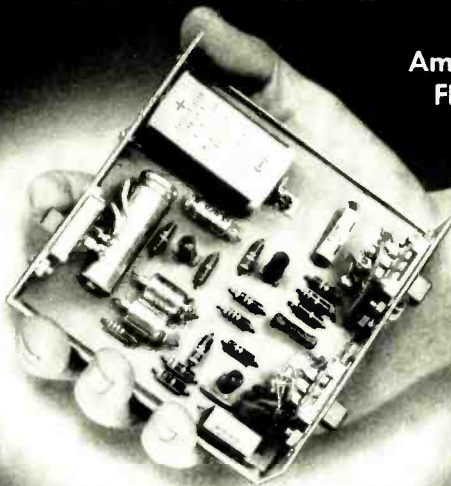
In 1955 the Louisville Orchestra under the direction of Robert Whitney, undertook the commissioning and recording of newly created com-

Continued on next page

MAY 1956

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- Can be used with any existing amplifier, audio control, or sound system. ■ Battery powered. Power consumption only 0.033 watts. Battery will last as long as it would when lying idle on a shelf! ■ Can be used as a phono-graph or microphone preamplifier.
- Uniform response, within 2 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. ■ Built-in switch selects cartridge impedance. ■ Handles all popular magnetic cartridges including very low-level type. Does not require transformer with the latter. ■ Hum level: *absolute zero!*
- Noise level, 65 db below 10 mv input for high impedance cartridges. Better than 60 db below 2 mv for low impedance cartridges. ■ Incorporates RIAA equalization, now standard on all records. ■ Permits output leads up to 200 ft. ■ Three Controls: Power/Volume, Cartridge Impedance Selector, Phono-Microphone Selector Switch.
- Uses three transistors. Printed wiring throughout. ■ Fully shielded chassis with bottom cover. ■ Attractive control plate. ■ size: 2" x 4" x 4½" deep. ■ wgt.: 12 oz.

Price, \$27.50 • Battery, \$1.95 • 110V AC Power Supply, \$4.95

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.



"Breathtaking!" — EDWARD
TATNALL
CANBY

THE
FISHER
Master Audio Control

SERIES 80-C

"**S**TARTLINGLY DIFFERENT," says Edward Tatnall Canby, *Audio Magazine*. "Has everything, at a very reasonable price for top-quality hi-fi equipment. The easiest to read and operate I've ever seen. The specs on performance are breathtaking and the over-all quality of its electrical operation is pretty closely comparable to that of a professional broadcast console control board. This is the current standard for really hi-fi operation of controls in the home. Hum, distortion, *et al* are so low as to be inaudible and mostly unmeasurable in the lab. And all this, mind you, in the middle price range."

Chassis Only, \$99.50 • Mahogany or Blonde Cabinet, \$9.95

Remarkable Features of THE FISHER 80-C

- Professional, lever-type equalization for all current recording characteristics.
- Seven inputs, including two Phono, Mic and Tape.
- Two cathode-follower outputs.
- Complete mixing and fading on two, three, four or five channels.
- Bass and Treble Tone Controls of the variable-crossover feedback type.
- Accurately calibrated Loudness Balance Control.
- Self-powered.
- Magnetically shielded and potted transformer.
- DC on all filaments; achieves hum level that is inaudible under any conditions.
- Inherent hum: non-measurable. (On Phono, 72 db below output on 10 mv input signal; better than 85 db below 2x output on high-level channels.)
- IM and harmonic distortion: non-measurable.
- Frequency response: uniform, 10 to 100,000 cycles.
- Separate equalization and amplification directly from tape playback head.
- Four dual-purpose tubes, all shielded and sluck-mounted.
- Separate, high-gain microphone preamplifier.
- Push-Button Channel-Selectors with individual indicator lights and simultaneous AC On-Off switching on two channels (for tuner, TV, etc.)
- Master Volume Control plus 5 independent Level Controls on front panel.
- 11 Controls plus 5 push-buttons.
- Three auxiliary AC receptacles, size: Chassis, 12 3/4" x 7 3/4" x 4 1/4" high. In cabinet, 13-11 1/2" x 8" x 5 3/4" high. Shipping weight, 10 pounds.

Prices Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from preceding page

positions by contemporary composers of orchestral, choral, and operatic works. Most of the pieces received favorable reviews in this and other magazines, and on the whole the project was proclaimed important and deserving of public support.

Now the second year of the venture is well underway and the Society hopes for an even more successful year than last. Their 1956 series includes recordings (engineered by Columbia Masterworks technicians) of new compositions of, among others, Antheil, Shapero, Weber, Sowerby, Dahl, Guarnieri, and Krenek. In all there will be fifteen composers represented on six records, issued every other month.

You can't buy these records at record stores; they're sold by subscription only. The subscription price is \$32.50 a year, if paid in full; \$35.70 if paid on receipt of each record (\$5.95 per record, plus \$3.20 carrying charge). And at the time of this writing (but don't count on it until you've checked with the Society) you get a free bonus record and an album for six records with each subscription.

Write for their brochure and further information: the address is Louisville Philharmonic Society, 830 S. Fourth St., Louisville 3, Ky.

Tape-Clip

For tape enthusiasts who have trouble getting that tape to stay in the reels, there's a new gadget on the market which might solve their problem. The "Magi-Clip" is a non-magnetic brass clip that snaps over one flange of the tape reel, keeping tape from unwinding and wrinkling.

Price: 4 for \$1.00, 10 for \$2.00, 30 for \$5.00. Order from Niblack Thorne Co., Dept. P-5, Box 86, Scottsdale, Ariz.

A New Opening and a Move

Have you Newark, N. J.-ites seen the new Sound Reproduction Inc. showroom at 35 New St.? They sell all major brands of components and also do custom installation work.

And Bill Case of San Antonio, Tex., has moved to 4206 Broadway (at Hildebrand) in that city. His store

has a record department as well as components (and, of course, HIGH FIDELITY and AUDIOCRAFT).

Anyone Know. . . ?

. . . Where a subscriber can obtain a plastic cover as a protective over his record changer? There are covers for mixers, blenders, toasters, roasters, bowls, air conditioners, etc. Why not audio equipment, especially record players?

Strictly for "Hams"

We don't know how many "hams" (the amateur radio variety) are subscribers to HIGH FIDELITY, (or for that matter, how many of any other variety) but we figure there probably are a few. Anyway, of possible interest to them is the fact that the Voice of America has inaugurated a special broadcast of information "of, by and for the radio 'hams' of America." The program will be narrated by Bill Leonard of CBS (W2SKE) and will supply facts on new equipment and operating techniques, upcoming events in amateur radio, forecasts of atmospheric conditions, and interviews with experts in the communication field.

Listen to the Voice on 17830, 15280, 15270, 15200, 11870, and 11790 kc. for fifteen minutes each Saturday at 1:45 p.m.

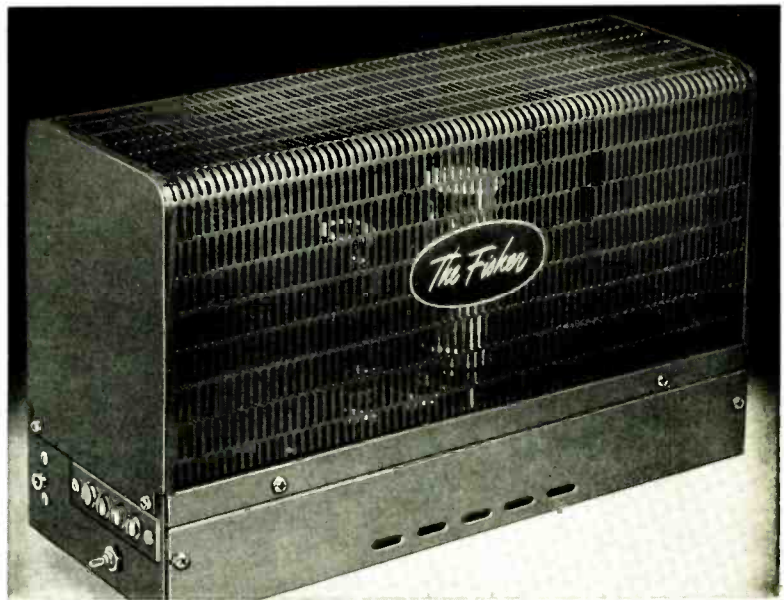
Westchester's Westlab

Westlab Electronics Inc., 2475 Central Ave., is in the midst of a series of lectures and demonstrations, five or six of which you still may be able to attend. The series started on March 14 and was to go on for thirteen weeks. The lectures (on high fidelity, naturally) are free, but you should call or write to assure yourself a seat. They're from 8 to 9:30 p.m. each Wednesday, and the 8 to 8:30 portion is broadcast simultaneously over WFAS-FM.

If you do or don't take in the lectures, it's almost worth a trip to Westlab to see their signpost outside the building. In addition to the name of the company, the sign reads "Westchester's own High Fidelity Hang-out," and just to the right of the sign is a hangman's noose, both of these hanging from a gallows facsimile. Macabre, huh?

Continued on next page

MAY 1956



The Best In Its Class!

THE
NEW



FISHER Standard Amplifier

MODEL 20-A

HERE is the amplifier you have asked for — a *low-cost* unit of conspicuous *quality*. The new FISHER Standard Amplifier meets the most exacting requirements in its field. As you would expect, traditional FISHER quality, handsome appearance, excellent workmanship and advanced design are evident throughout this exceptional unit.

Uncomparable Features of THE FISHER Model 20-A

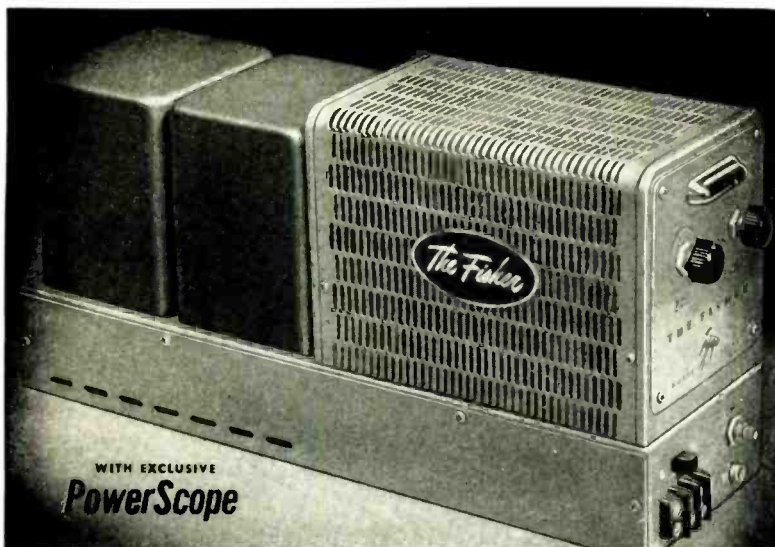
- Power Output constant within 1 db at 15 watts from 15 to 30,000 cycles.
- Less than 0.7% distortion at 15 watts; less than 0.4% at 10 watts.
- Intermodulation distortion less than 1.5% at 10 watts and less than .75% at 5 watts.
- Uniform response, ± 0.1 db from 20 to 20,000 cycles; within 1 db from 10 to 100,000 cycles.
- Hum and noise better than 90 db below full output!
- Internal impedance is 1 ohm for 16-ohm operation, giving a damping factor of 16. This assures low distortion and superior transient response.
- TUBE COMPLEMENT: 1—12AX7, 2—6L84, 1—EZ80.
- OUTPUT IMPEDANCES: 4, 8 and 16 ohms.
- SIZE: 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 13" x 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. WEIGHT: 13 lbs.

Price Slightly Higher In the West

Price Only \$59.50

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.



AN EXCEPTIONAL, NEW THIRTY-WATT AMPLIFIER • HANDLES SIXTY-WATT PEAKS!

An Outstanding Buy!

THE 
FISHER

30-Watt Amplifier

MODEL 80-AZ

ANOTHER FISHER FIRST — our great new 30-watt amplifier with *PowerScope*, a Peak Power Indicator calibrated in watts to show instantly the peak load on your speaker system. The new FISHER 80-AZ Amplifier is the first with a positive indicator to prevent voice coil damage. The Model 80-AZ is magnificent in appearance and quality.

Incomparable Features of THE FISHER Model 80-AZ

- High output — less than 0.5% distortion at 30 watts; less than 0.05% at 10 watts. Handles 60-watt peaks. ■ Intermodulation distortion less than 0.5% at 25 watts and 0.2% at 10 watts. ■ Uniform response 10 to 50,000 cycles; within 0.1 db from 20 to 20,000 cycles. ■ Power output is constant within 1 db at 30 watts, from 15 to 35,000 cycles. ■ Hum and noise level better than 96 db below full output! ■ Three separate feedback loops for lowest distortion and superior transient response. ■ Unique cathode feedback circuit for triode performance with the efficiency of tetrodes. ■ Output transformer has interleaved windings and a grain-oriented steel core. ■ Three Controls: *PowerScope*, *Z-Matic* and Input Level. ■ Handsome, brushed-brass control panel (with sufficient cable for built-in installations.) ■ Tube Complement: 1—12AT7, 1—12AU7A, 2—EL-37, 1—5V4-G, 1—*PowerScope* Indicator, 1—Regulator. ■ 8- and 16-ohm outputs. ■ Size: 15½ x 4¼ x 6¾" high. WEIGHT: 22 lbs.

Price Only \$99.50

Price Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP., 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1 • N. Y.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from preceding page

Standards: New Approach

Many individuals and several industry committees have worked long and hard in an effort to set up standards for high fidelity equipment. As readers know, the problem is well nigh impossible of solution. Now, from the Radio-Electronic-Television Manufacturers Association comes word of a new approach. We quote: "Chairman Joseph N. Benjamin of the RETMA High Fidelity Sub-Committee announced that this group had started an investigation of the possibility of industry-wide standards for advertising of high fidelity products.

"This project does not contemplate any attempt to set standards for high fidelity or in any way to specify what is or is not high fidelity. However, the industry has grown so rapidly that a serious problem has arisen with regard to advertising. The conflicting claims, confusing terms, and non-comparable specifications have caused considerable misunderstanding not only in the public mind but also with the high fidelity dealer.

"For instance, high fidelity amplifiers may have four different power output ratings — normal output for sine wave input, maximum output for sine wave input, peak power for any input, and pulse peak power. A manufacturer may legitimately rate his amplifier in any of the above ways, and all of these terms are used without too much discrimination.

"It is the aim of this project to allow the use of any of the above methods of specifying output provided standard descriptions are used by all manufacturers so that the public and the high fidelity dealers can compare and evaluate competitive amplifiers.

"This procedure will be applied to other components in the high fidelity field as well as to amplifiers. Some of the features which will be explored for standardization in tuners and amplifiers are IM distortion, hum level, and sensitivity; in cartridges, output; in record changers and players, wow, rumble and flutter; in speakers, power handling capacity, response, etc.

"Further discussion of this project will be had at the June meeting of RETMA in Chicago."



LETTERS



SIR:

I congratulate Roland Gelatt on writing the editorial on records in libraries [March 1955], and I congratulate you for publishing this editorial.

A master library of historic recording should be established, but there the matter shouldn't rest. Lending libraries should be established, particularly in the small towns, to offer people the loan of records, quite in the way that they can borrow books. Records are as much a part of our heritage as are books.

It so happens that I have written an article on this very subject which will appear in the May issue of *Good Housekeeping Magazine*. You can see that I consider the matter of records in libraries an important one.

George R. Marek
Manager,
Record Albums Department
RCA Victor

SIR:

Anybody in the record industry with any sense of responsibility or any feeling for the art with which he is involved will certainly agree entirely with Mr. Gelatt's sentiments. More than that, however, all of us have felt, even over the last fifteen years, terrible moments of poignant regret and chagrin at the knowledge of what has happened and is happening to the archives of recorded history, both musical and sociological.

All best wishes.

Goddard Lieberman
Executive Vice President
Columbia Records

SIR:

I read with great enthusiasm the editorial by Roland Gelatt in which he proposes the establishment of a master library of tape recorded music.

Most of us in the tape recorder and high fidelity industry often overlook the ultimate objective of our being in business, which is the manufacture of equipment to bring

Continued on next page



NEW! And Only \$99⁵⁰!



THE FISHER FM TUNER MODEL FM-40

HERE IT IS, a FISHER FM Tuner — with all that the name implies — for only \$99.50. Through the years it has been our policy to bring equipment of FISHER calibre within the reach of the widest possible audience. Rarely has that objective been more spectacularly attained. For the FM-40 represents one of our greatest values in almost two decades. It is a superb combination of engineering excellence and dazzling performance at moderate cost. Its specifications, conservatively outlined below, are your best index to the quality of this instrument.

Important Features of THE FISHER FM-40

- Meter for micro-accurate, center-of-channel tuning. ■ Sensitivity: 3 microvolts for 20 db of quieting. ■ Uniform response, ± 1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles.
- Three-gang variable capacitor. ■ Three IF stages and a cascade RF stage.
- Two outputs: Detector/Multiplex (on switch) plus cathode-follower-type Main Audio, permitting leads up to 200 feet. ■ Two Controls: AC Power/Volume, and Station Selector. ■ Chassis completely shielded and shock-mounted; includes bottom plate. ■ 8 tubes: 1—6BQ7A, 1—6U8, 3—6BH6, 1—6AL5, 1—12AU7A, 1—6X4. ■ Folded dipole antenna supplied. ■ Heavy flywheel tuning mechanism. ■ Beautiful brown-and-gold brushed-brass, front control panel. ■ Highly legible, edge-lighted glass dial scale (accurately calibrated slide-rule type) with logging scale. ■ Self-powered. ■ SIZE: 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, 4" high, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep, including knobs. ■ SHIPPING WEIGHT: 15 pounds.

Professional FM Tuner • Only \$99.50

MAHOGANY OR BLONDE CABINET: \$14.95

Prices Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP., 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1 • N. Y.



AM Quality Leader!

THE FISHER AM TUNER

MODEL AM-80

SHORTLY after the appearance of the famous FISHER FM-80 Tuner, we received many requests for an AM counterpart of the same blue-ribbon breed. The AM-80 was engineered in response to those requests and we are proud of it — as its owners will be. In areas beyond the service of FM stations, users of the AM-80 will discover with delight that it has the pulling power of a professional communications receiver, bringing *enjoyable* reception of ordinarily elusive, distant stations. The AM-80 offers broad-tuning for *high fidelity* AM reception, as well as medium and sharp tuning for suppression of interference where it exists; and it is a perfect companion for the FM-80. The specifications below speak for themselves.

Outstanding Features of THE FISHER AM-80

- Features a relative-sensitivity tuning meter for micro-accurate station selection
- Sensitivity: better than *one microvolt!*
- Three-gang variable condenser.
- One tuned RF and two IF stages.
- Three-position, adjustable band-width.
- Frequency response (broad position) — 3 db at 8 Kc. Audio section: uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles.
- Built-in 10 Kc whistle filter.
- Dual antenna inputs. Loop antenna supplied.
- Three high-impedance inputs.
- Cathode-follower output permits leads up to 200 feet.
- Completely shielded and shock-mounted construction, including bottom plate.
- Flywheel tuning.
- Slide-rule tuning dial with logging scale.
- Beautiful, brushed-brass control panel.
- Four controls: Power Sensitivity, Function, Tuning, Output Level Control.
- Tube Complement: Total of Eight, 3—6BJ6, 1—6BE6, 1—6AL5, 2—6C4, 1—6X4. Size: 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide, 4" high, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep, including knobs.

Price Only \$139.50

Mahogany or Blonde Cabinet: **\$14.95**

Price Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

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FISHER RADIO CORP. · 21-25 44th DRIVE · L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

good music to a wider and wider audience. It is certainly obvious that the great libraries of our country would be able to offer more music to more people if recorded concerts on tape could be made available on request. This would include music and other programs of a historical nature; also obvious is the fact that duplicates of priceless records could be made on tape, allowing the preservation of the original recording.

Much luck to the American Institute of Recorded Sound.

Sid Weiss

Audio Sales Manager,
Western Region
Berlant-Concertone

SIR:

It looks like a . . . good idea to us. One idea which has not been expressed in the editorial is the possibility of installing a duplicating system at the central library which could provide copies, either free or at some charge, to other archives or institutions. I assume that Mr. Gelatt may have this in the back of his mind.

J. A. Ford

Manager, Advertising and Sales
Promotion
Ampex Corporation

SIR:

. . . The formation of an Institute of Recorded Sound . . . is certainly a worthy project, but it is only a start in the right direction. What we need is a nation-wide program for the formation of record libraries which will serve, like the nation's many libraries of books, the entire country.

. . . Perhaps it is a bit early to discuss the technicalities of the functioning of such a library of recorded music, but it is also important to point out ways and means in order to show many of the large private collectors of this country that their prized disks and cylinders can be put to good use for educational purposes without danger of mishandling their choice, but fragile, prizes. Every collector likes to think of his collection being passed on intact, and not being broken up and sold piecemeal by his heirs who, chances are, will know nothing and care less if his 1902 Carusos are represented by original G & T pressings or by copies struck from the presses at Hayes in 1950.

Naturally, the serious collector does not like to think of his lovely originals being circulated to the non-collecting public like so many books that are dropped through a slot in the library door after hours. Thus the first prerequisite for the ideal record library (after suitable housing and cataloguing are arranged for) will be an understanding librarian who will treat rare recordings like rare art objects. In order to make them available to the student, the library must have available tape and disk recording equipment, plus a loving technician, so that copies of any record on the library shelves can be made immediately available, and at low cost. If our major libraries throughout the country will offer such a repository to the large and small record collectors throughout the country, I am sure that the bequests will come trooping gaily. I for one have a collection of something over 15,000 vocal recordings dating (at present) from 1895 to 1956 which I intend to expand and enjoy as long as I am in a position to do so.

So let's get existing libraries interested. Of course they will need funds—and, if I may quote Mr. Gelatt's editorial, "Are you listening, Mr. Ford Foundation?" In the meantime, I stand ready and willing to allow any public institution such as The American Institute of Recorded Sound, to place on tape my entire collection, or any part of it, in the public interest.

W. R. Moran
La Canada, Calif.

SIR:

I was deeply interested in your editorial in the March issue of HIGH FIDELITY. It is on a subject in which I have long been deeply interested.

The question arises "where do we go from here!" Action is required—so I am taking the liberty of offering a suggestion. Most metropolitan newspapers and many magazines have Record Editors or Columnists. Couldn't a personal appeal be made to them and through them to their readers to contribute to such a central depository as you suggest—or possibly a committee from among them, together with other interested parties, might be formed to further the idea.

As to the location of a depository for such memorabilia, I suggest the New York Public Library. They have

Continued on next page



AMERICA'S TOP FM TUNER IN SENSITIVITY, APPEARANCE AND WORKMANSHIP

150,000 Witnesses

HAVE VERIFIED THE FM-80'S SUPERIORITY!

THE 
FISHER

FM TUNER MODEL
FM-80

World's Best by LAB Standards

THOSE who attended the Audio Fairs in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia found that only Fisher Radio Corporation had set up a battery of regular production tuners so that you, the consumer, might operate them as you saw fit, in an obviously radio-difficult location, and with only the most elementary of antennas taped to the wall. More than 150,000 people made these tests, and were astonished to find FM stations coming in perfectly from 'impossible' distances. This Missouri-show-me style test has settled once and for all the question as to who makes the best tuners in America. To those who did not attend the Audio Fairs, we say: Try it before you buy it! **Chassis Only, \$139.50**
Mahogany or Blonde Cabinet, \$14.95

Outstanding Features of THE FISHER FM-80

- TWO meters. One to indicate sensitivity, one to indicate center-of-channel for micro-accurate tuning. ■ Armstrong system, with two IF stages, dual limiters and a cascode RF stage. ■ Full limiting even on signals as weak as one microvolt. ■ Dual antenna inputs: 72 ohms and 300 ohms balanced (exclusive!). ■ Sensitivity: 1½ microvolts for 20 db of quieting on 72-ohm input; 3 microvolts for 20 db of quieting on 300-ohm input. ■ Chassis completely shielded and shock-mounted, including tuning condenser, to eliminate microphonics, and noise from otherwise accumulated dust. ■ Three controls — Variable AFC/Line-Switch, Sensitivity, and Station Selector PLUS an exclusive Output Level Control. ■ Two bridged outputs — low-impedance, cathode-follower type, permitting output leads up to 200 feet. ■ 11 tubes. ■ Dipole antenna supplied. Beautiful, brushed-brass front panel. ■ Self-powered. ■ WEIGHT: 15 pounds. CHASSIS SIZE: 12¾" wide, 4" high, 8¼" deep including control knobs.

Price Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

50-Watt, All-Triode!

THE LABORATORY STANDARD

FISHER

AMPLIFIER MODEL 50-AZ



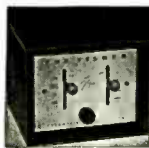
■ "Of the very best!"—*High Fidelity Magazine*. Will handle 100 watts peak. World's finest all-triode amplifier. Uniform response within 1 db from 5 to 100,000 cycles. Less than 1% distortion at 50 watts. Hum and noise content 96 db below full output—virtually non-measurable! Oversize components and quality workmanship in every detail. Includes FISHER Z-MATIC, at no additional cost. **\$159.50**

FINE ACCESSORIES



MIXER-FADER • Model 50-M

NEW! Electronic mixing or fading of any two signal sources (such as microphone, phono, radio, etc.) No insertion loss. Extremely low hum and noise level. High impedance input; cathode follower output. 12AX7 tube. Self-powered. Beautiful plastic cabinet. **Only \$19.95**



PREAMPLIFIER-EQUALIZER • 50-PR-C WITH VOLUME CONTROL

Professional phono equalization. Separate switches for HF roll-off and LF turn-over; 16 combinations of phono equalization. Handles any magnetic cartridge. Extremely low hum. Uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Two triode stages. Fully shielded. Self-powered.

New, Low Price \$19.95



HI-LO FILTER SYSTEM • Model 50-F

Electronic, sharp cut-off filter system for suppression of turntable rumble, record scratch and high frequency distortion—with *absolute minimum* loss of tonal range. Independent switches for high and low frequency cut-off. Use with any high-fidelity system.

New, Low Price \$24.95



PREAMPLIFIER • Model PR-6

A self-powered unit of excellent quality, yet moderate cost. Can be used with any low-level magnetic cartridge, microphone, or for tape playback. Two triode stages. High gain. Exclusive feedback circuit permits long output leads. Fully shielded. Uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles. *The best unit of its type available.*

Only \$10.95

Prices Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

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FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

done such outstanding work in pioneering along the very lines of your suggestion that I think they are worthy of recognition. It is also the fact that New York is the Musical Center.

The only drawback now is space, and I am informed that definite plans are in hand for materially enlarging the space at the library.

Walter W. Clark
New York, N. Y.

SIR:

In the Lippincott First Edition of my *Toscanini and the Art of Orchestral Performance* there are two slips worth mentioning.

On page 49 the final two lines should read: "six broadcasts of about one hour each and fourteen concerts"; while on page 121 the numbers of the Rossini overture should be inserted as follows: *15191 and DB-3541.

Both these errors have been corrected in the first British edition, I am happy to report.

R. C. Marsh
Cambridge
England

SIR:

There has appeared in a recent record release a gross error. We are writing this in hopes of setting the record straight to the purchasers of this particular recording. We are referring to the Mercury Olympian recording of the *1812 Overture* (MG 50054), and in particular to the bell effects.

In the spoken commentary appended to the music, Deems Taylor makes the statement that the bells hung in the Harkness Memorial Tower at Yale University are "... as close as it is possible to come, on this side of the Atlantic, to the sound of the Kremlin bells. ..." This is not quite true. The bell tower of Lowell House at Harvard University has seventeen bells, removed in 1930 from the Danialovsky Monastery in Moscow. They are hung in a stationary position as is the Russian custom. Their weight varies from twenty pounds to thirteen tons, and they are rung every Sunday. Not only do the more numerous Lowell House bells have a wider tonal range than the Harkness bells, but they are distinctly Russian in origin.

We submit that the bells of the

Harkness Memorial Tower are definitely in second place, on this side of the Atlantic, when it comes to sounding like Russian bells, and we sincerely urge Mercury Records to take note of this fact.

*William Day
Edmund Parsons
Robert Wilson*

The Lowell House Bell-Ringers
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR:

The galaxy of black diamonds in the March issue of *Mein Lieber Schwann* gives rise to a few thoughts . . .

The LP market must indeed be glutted when so many famous works and renowned "name" talents are so ruthlessly axed on such short notice OR the plethora of duplications must have made just selection too difficult for many a prospective purchaser of a given title.

Perhaps there is room for one or more retail outlets specializing in manufacturers' remnants, some of which surely will soon be sought at premium prices — for, doubtless, more massacres of the catalogue, will take place from time to time.

This correspondent, having found a mere six titles on his "wants" list now withdrawn can, by dint of haste, make hay before sunset. How many others are so lucky?

The European system in the 78 rpm days was to give about six months' notice — a system eminently more fair and one which sometimes brought sufficient orders to prevent a deletion until considerably later than planned.

Edward Hill
New York, N. Y.

SIR:

What's what with this blighter Watt? As your footnote pointed out, I have been using this PU circuit since before 1927 and have practically finished work on my Trans Ultimate design. Why should you rehash all the obsolete material by Watt as if he had originated it? If you want to set your readers straight, please point out that Watt's only contribution was the introduction of P-matic.

Predecessor D. Resonator
London, England

P. S. I am fortunate to be located in a 220 volt area where we can use 8 ohm speakers in the PU design, with 76 output tubes instead of 38. This gives over 1,500 watts peak. Since my

Continued on next page



MODEL 80-T • MOST ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL TUNER WITH COMPLETE AUDIO CONTROL

Outperforms Them All!

THE SERIES 80

FISHER

FM-AM TUNERS

HERE are America's *only* FM-AM Tuners with TWO meters for micro-accurate tuning. Says a FISHER dealer: "In a rather amazing test, we logged some 23 FM stations in the greater New York area including several over 140 miles distant! All New York FM stations came in with absolutely no background noise. Even on weak stations there was no drift."

— *House of Music, Southampton, N. Y.*

Outstanding Features of THE FISHER Series 80 Tuners

- The 80-T features *extreme sensitivity* (1.5 mv for 20 db of quieting.) ■ *Separate* FM and AM front ends, completely shielded and shock-mounted. ■ *Separate* tuning meters for FM and AM ■ 72-ohm, plus *exclusive*, balanced 300-ohm antenna inputs for increased signal-to-noise ratio. ■ AM selectivity adjustable: AM sensitivity better than 1 microvolt. ■ *Inherent hum non-measurable*. ■ Distortion below 0.04% for 1 volt output. ■ 4 inputs, including *separate tape playback* preamp-equalizer.
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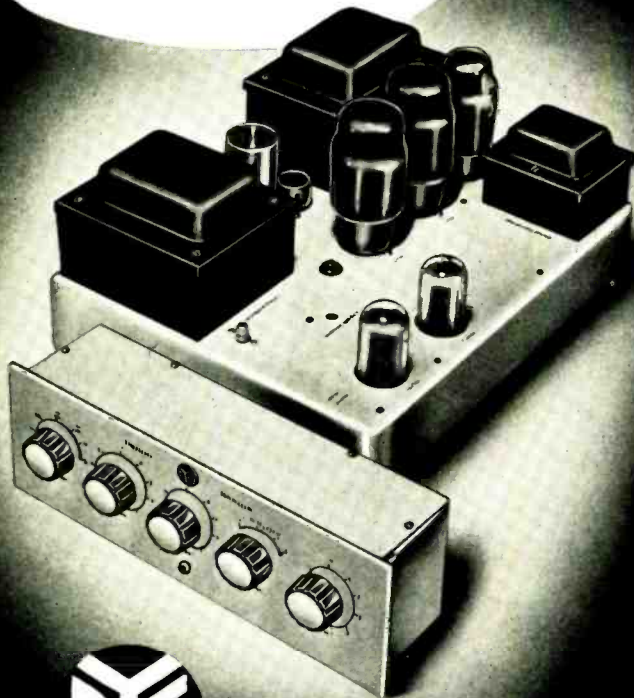
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LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

average listening level is about 9/16 watt, I am following true British conservative design techniques.

SIR:

Paul Affelder's review of Oistrakh's *Symphonie Espagnole* [Feb. issue] causes me to put in a word for one of my favorite recordings. Affelder states that only Oistrakh's and Menuhin's recordings of this work contain all of the five movements. How could he have overlooked Alfredo Campoli's brilliant performance (London LL 763), which contains the composer's *Intermezzo* and in addition possesses just about the most superb "presence" and balance between the soloist and orchestra that I have ever heard in a recording of a violin concerto?

I can forgive Affelder's overlooking the aged, but still excellent, *Finlandia* by Eckerberg (Capitol H-8138) in his Sibelius Discography [Nov. '55] since this disk is no longer listed in the LP catalogue; but I cannot forgive his slight to Campoli's masterpiece, for this great artist has been slighted all too often by American critics.

Daniel J. Bendle
Parkersburg, W. Va.

SIR:

My problem is this: I wish to find out where I may purchase the large metal record discs which are played on old fashioned music boxes. I am particularly interested in getting some music to be played on an old Regina Music Box now in possession of my grandfather.

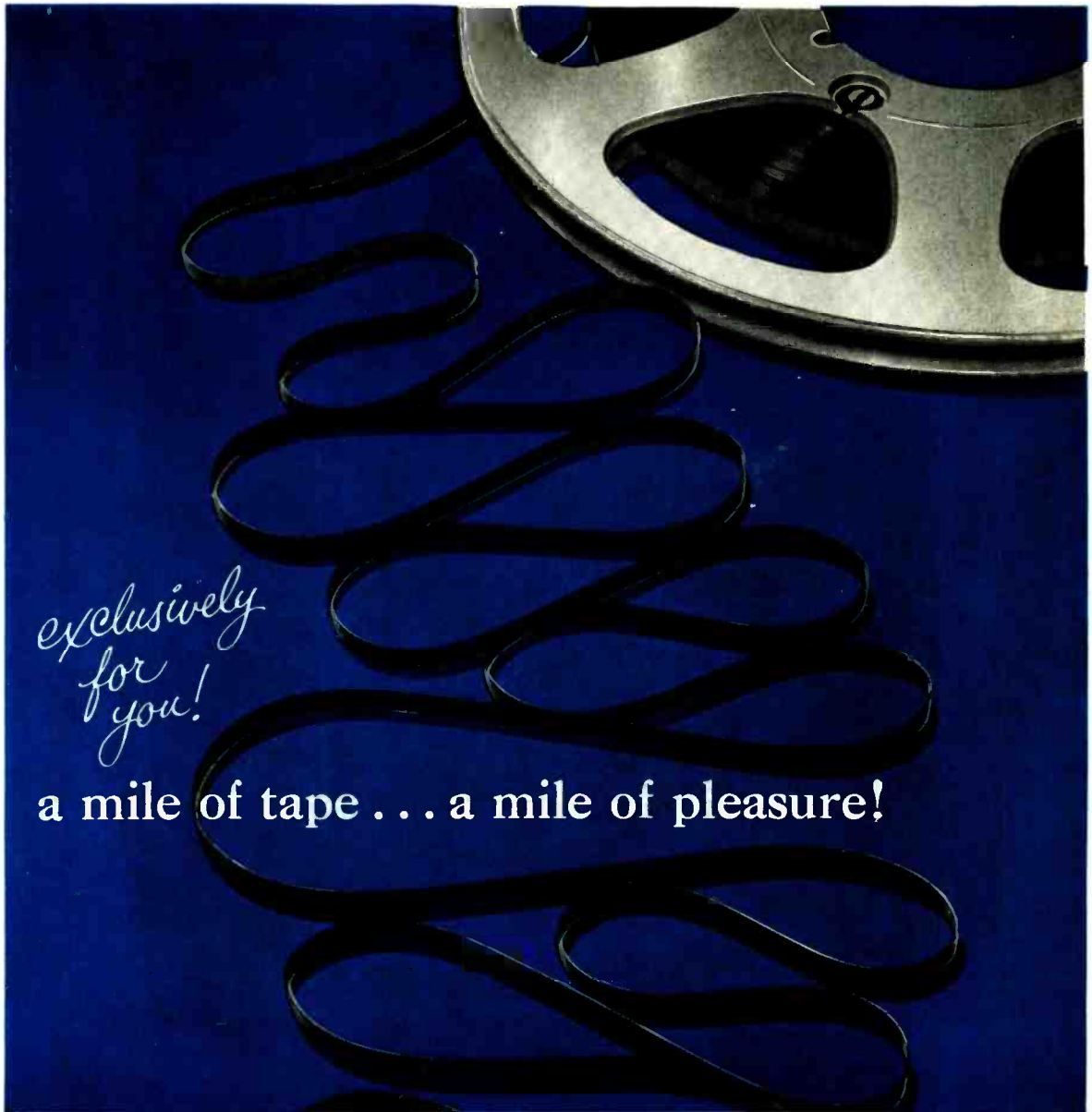
If you know of any shops, collectors, etc., would you please (let me know).

M. R. Swisher, M. D.
2119 Central Ave.
Middletown, Ohio

SIR:

I wonder whether anyone knows of a supply source of cardboard record covers. They certainly aren't difficult or expensive to make, but I can't seem to be able to get any as protection for my club disks, replacement for worn-out LP holders, etc. Some uniform design upon which a label could be pasted (à la Angel "Standard" packaging) would be best. The manufacturers have ignored my notes, and local record dealers use the unsatisfactory manila sleeve.

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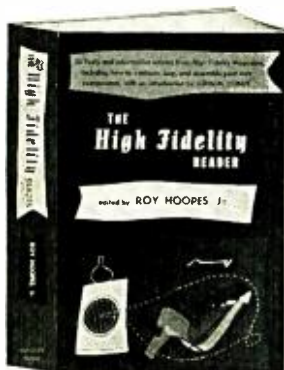


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LISTENER'S

by R. D. Darrell

BOOKSHELF

RACHMANINOFF the pianist was unquestionably a titan of our times and probably the first of the keyboard giants whose greatness was representatively captured for all time in recordings. Rachmaninoff the composer was an anachronism, a relic of the age of ultra-romanticism, whose lush emotionalism is likely long to enrage tough-minded listeners as violently as it transports the tender-minded into sheer ecstasy. Rachmaninoff the man was—and seems certain to remain—a baffling enigma.

In the past it was easy to assume that the mystery of this artist's personality was deliberately cultivated by his own implacably maintained reticence and was needlessly enhanced by the blind worship and even blinder disregard of factual accuracy which have characterized most of the biographies, at least up to Seroff's (Simon & Schuster, 1950). But even now that we are given what is probably the closest possible approach to a "definitive," soundly documented life, only the surfaces of the mystery are satisfactorily clarified—the basic personal enigma remains as impenetrable as ever.

Certainly Sergei Bertensson and Jay Leyda have done their best in the long labors that went into *Sergei Rachmaninoff: A Lifetime in Music* (New York University Press, \$6.50), and they have profited by the close collaboration of the musician's cousin and sister-in-law, Sophia Satina, as well as by access to the Rachmaninoff Archive at the Library of Congress and to the memories and records of apparently all surviving colleagues and friends. The nine pages of photographs include some fascinating early ones and scarcely less delightful informal snapshots from the later years. The detailed documentation is achieved with admirable unobtrusiveness (without footnotes) in a fifteen-page appendix. And there are not only

eighteen pages) and index (some twenty-six pages), but also a very model of what a discography should be (some nineteen pages, prepared by Philip L. Miller). Moreover, the writing is straightforward and there are generous, well-chosen quotations from Rachmaninoff's own letters and those of his family, associates, and admirers.

I, for one, learned a great deal that was new to me, particularly about Rachmaninoff's childhood and student years. Yet while the account of his decidedly strange upbringing and apprentice years (as one of Zverev's incredible ménage of "cubs") might provide a psychoanalyst with ample clues to the complex personality which evolved, I still have no real clue either to Rachmaninoff's "greatness" or vulnerable "weaknesses." Nor, since no attempt is made to analyze the music itself in any depth, have I found any fresh bases for the evaluation of its marked aesthetic dichotomies and contradictions.

Yet the very enigmas which are sharpened rather than resolved here make the book itself, as well as its subject, one of inexhaustible fascination. And reading it has reminded me anew of the peculiar yet substantial personal debt I owe to Rachmaninoff. He was one of the first major virtuosos I ever heard in person, and his Lincoln-esque frame and tragedy-ravaged face gave me my earliest, most vivid impression of the authentic "look of genius." For some years I revelled whole-heartedly in his music, both by hand and by ear; then, for many more years, I despised it just as whole-mindedly. And, finally, it provided one of the pivots of my present aesthetic philosophy, which acknowledges that certain kinds of art which cannot possibly be respected intellectually still can be relished—and even "loved" in one sense—for their uniquely power-

Continued on page 24

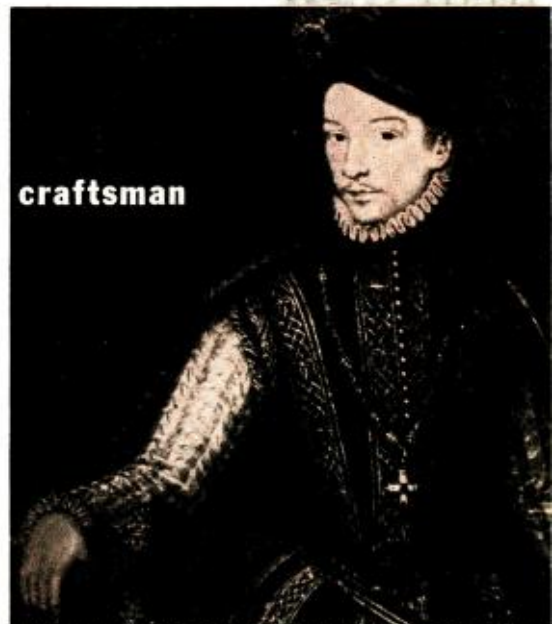
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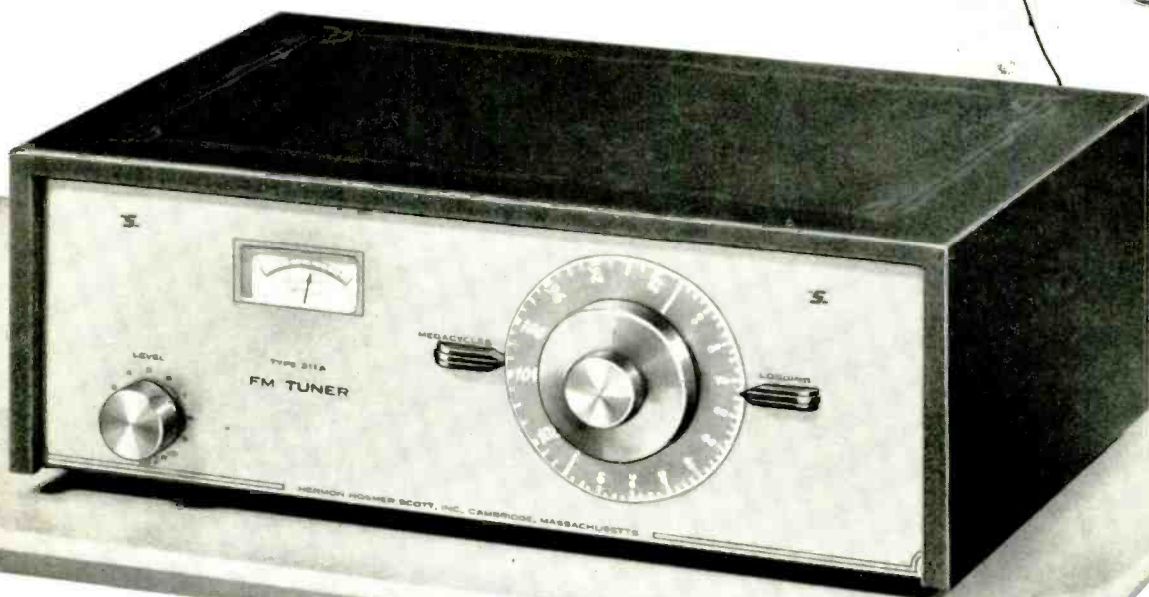
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BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 20

ful emotional, perhaps sheerly visceral, attractions. I still think of these last as appealing primarily to a *nostalgie de la bone* or to a sensual craving for sweetmeats, but at least I have learned to accept the real existence of such appetites and to recognize that music which gratifies them must be considered vitally significant when judged by its own criteria.

But whether you unreservedly admire all facets of Rachmaninoff, disdain most of them, or adopt something like my own scheme of double values, he is one of the most provocative and disturbing of all musical individualities to read—and think—about. This biography is a good place to start re-examining not only him but also one's own aesthetic preconceptions and ideals. Clearly differentiated blacks and whites, oppositions of "good" and "bad," and other such facile simplifications cannot remain long valid in either the realm of art or that of human nature.

Another Type of Ambiguity

All Vernon Duke (né Dukelsky) has in common with Rachmaninoff is the circumstance that he too is a musician, born in Russia, and possessed of an even more explicitly split personality, which in this case is frankly acknowledged, not to say thoroughly exploited. They differ markedly in stature, both artistic and personal. They differ most of all in articulateness, for Duke's passion for remembering all and telling all is as powerful as Rachmaninoff's was for isolation and secrecy. But it is just this difference which probably would have made a Rachmaninoff autobiography readable only by a few friends and students, while it certainly makes Duke's (*Passport to Paris*, Little Brown, \$5.00) one of the most absorbing "spillings" of a perhaps-not-so-"bright," but definitely "incalculable" soul I've ever come across in the world of music.

This response really shouldn't be. After all, the adventures of a well-born White Russian fleeing the Revolution to establish a new life in France and the United States make an old story. Ditto the memoirs of a serious composer who enjoys a brief vogue

Continued on page 27

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BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 24

and then fades into obscurity. Ditto the account of the (mild) trials and (largely financial) triumphs of a Broadway tunesmith. But when all three are mixed together, spiced with liberal dashes of venom, sweetened with a few lumps of hero-worship, and baked slowly in the oven of total recall — the resulting concoction proves to have amazingly rich flavor and substance.

This discovery doesn't change my previous opinions of either the man or his work, but I must admit that I greedily devoured every one of its some 484 pages, if not the eighteen-page double-columned index of names "dropped" along the way; and I relished especially its catty gossip (the portraits of the fantastic Diaghilev and Koussevitzky entourages and of the Great Men's treatment of their composer-protégés are nothing less than superb!) and its rarer outbursts of enthusiastic tribute (to Gershwin and Prokofiev in particular).

Naturally enough, Duke-Dukelsky has more to say about his own music than anyone else could or would want to; but happily he sticks mainly to the circumstances of its composition and performance (if any) and does not try to provide any kind of description, explanation, or apology. His basic subject is himself — perhaps his most interesting "composition" at that! And as the non-scrupulous confessions of a multiple personality, his story holds the reader's attention with a magnetic grip seldom encountered in musical — or any other — autobiographies.

Adoration of the Magus

Now, what a joy it is to turn from composers whose personalities or works leave us at worst disinterested and at best uncertain, to one who both as man and artist is so charismatic that he commands something closely approaching idolatry! And happily the first new Mozart bicentennial publications not only rank right beside the best of the previous literature (briefly surveyed in this column last January) but fill two aching gaps. One is the first popular, cheap selection of **Mozart's Letters**, edited by Eric Blom (Penguin, "Pelican" series, 85¢); the

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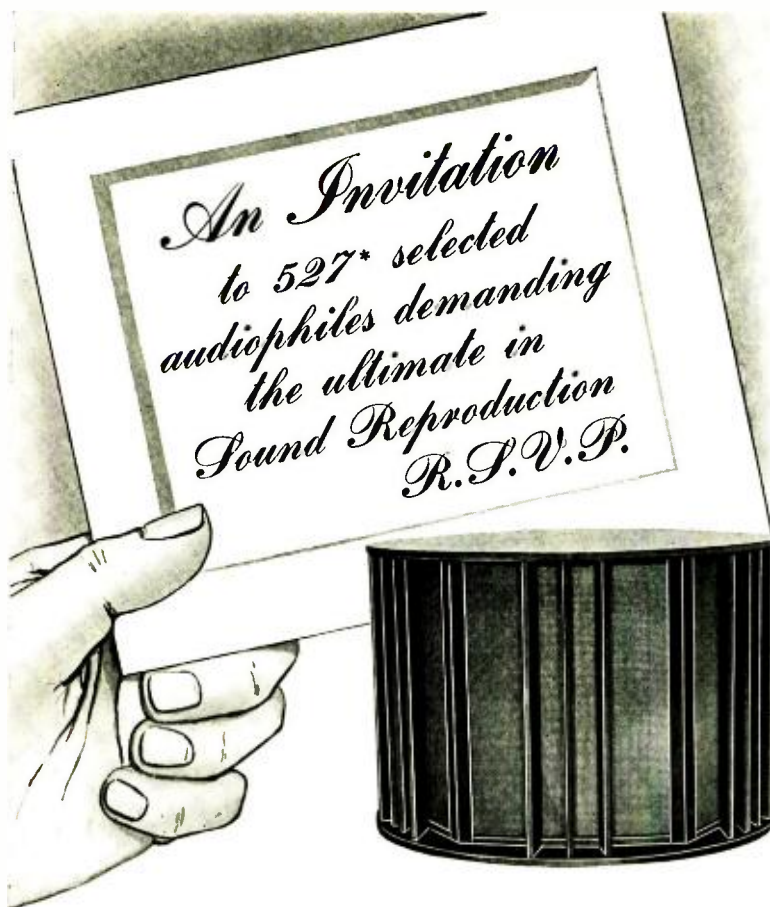


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BOOKSHELF

Continued from preceding page

other a collection of "Studies in Criticism and Bibliography," *Mozart in Retrospect* (Oxford, \$7.00), by one of the outstanding authorities of our day, A. Hyatt King.

Surely there is no further need to repeat myself on the subject of the *Letters* or their absolute essentiality to every serious listener. It is enough here to spread the good news (for those previously deterred by the size or cost of Emily Anderson's complete edition) that at last they have easy access to the very heart of that collection. For from it Blom has selected the best of Mozart's own letters (including a few Miss Anderson discovered too late for inclusion in her three volumes), retained the most useful of the Anderson annotations, and added brief running interludes of his own which skillfully supply the necessary backgrounds of contemporary events. And all this is done in a handsome pocket-sized paperback of some 278 pages, for a price which permits anyone to acquire a literally priceless treasure for himself—and indeed encourages every Mozartean evangelist to scatter it far and wide as a matchless gift to his friends.

King's essays demand something other than such unqualified endorsement, for I'm afraid that even among whole-hearted Mozartean many potential readers may feel that these are scholarly studies too specialized for easy or full appreciation. Well, in a sense that's true, and I must admit that some of the bibliographic details here (say those on autograph scores and early English editions) must be of limited concern to most non-professionals.

But these constitute only a small part of a book devoted mainly to the changes in attitude toward Mozart and his works over the years, to close examinations of his melodic idioms and textural techniques, and to searching illuminations of less familiar facets of his genius (in mastering counterpoint, writing for the clavier, organ, mechanical organ, etc.)—all of which can be richly revelatory to everyone who has come to know well the music itself on records. Besides, King is one scholar who knows not only how to write clearly and well but also how to communicate his own enthusiasm for, as well as his vast knowledge of,

Continued on page 32

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BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 28

his "specialized" subjects. I can't promise that this will be "easy" reading, but I can assure you that it charts some of the most delightful avenues I know to the acquisition of an invaluable and almost encyclopedic fund of Mozartean information.

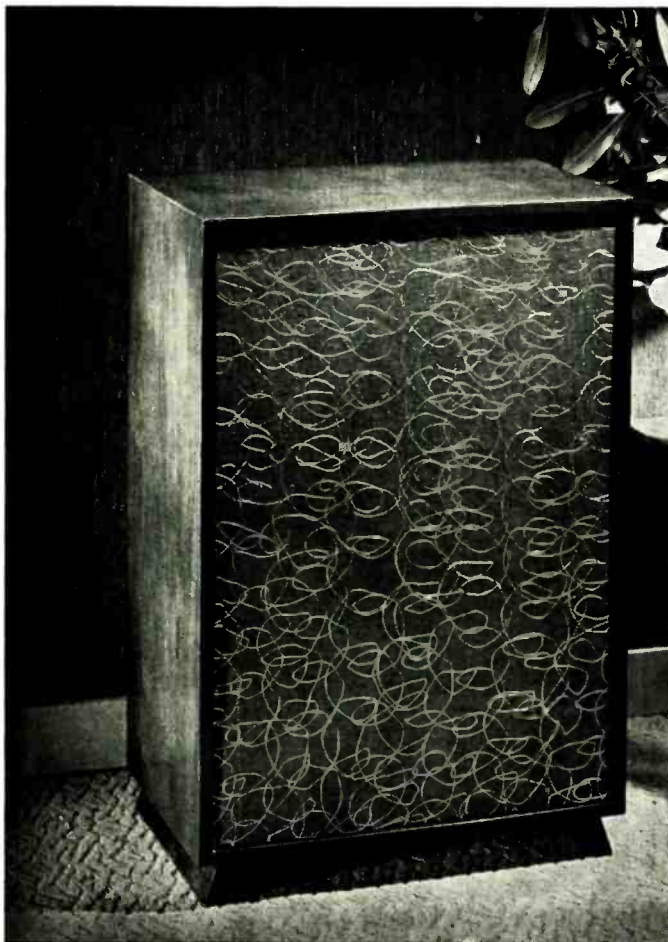
Grace Notes

Building Your Record Library. By way of strictly objective intramural report: Roy H. Hoopes, Jr., has edited a collection of "basic lists" from the series long familiar in the pages of HIGH FIDELITY. Some twenty-eight repertoires are represented by over five hundred recommended recordings selected and discussed by seventeen specialists (drawn mostly from the magazine's regular reviewing staff). These are framed between John M. Conly's introductory invitation to "Adventure in Listening" and C. G. Burke's prescriptions for the Care and Treatment of LPs. The book over-all runs to some 247 pages, including an eleven-page index of composers and performing artists (McGraw-Hill, \$3.95).

Radio Handbook. An old-time, close rival to the somewhat better-known *Radio Amateur's Handbook* appears currently in its fourteenth edition, differing from its competitor mainly in its use of hard covers and somewhat greater length (761 pages). Designed primarily for "hams," it offers comparatively little audio material, but much of the basic electronic information, discussion of power supplies and test gear, and especially the fine final chapter on "radio" (i.e., electronic) mathematics and calculations will certainly be useful to any audiocraftsman (Editors & Engineers, Ltd., or from Baker & Taylor, \$7.50).

Dance Bibliography. I hadn't been aware of it, but apparently one S. Yancey Belknap has been indefatigably engaged for some time in compiling a monumental (and no doubt valuable, to specialists) analytical guide to articles and illustrations in dance periodicals, for here is Vol. 5, covering the period 1951-52, with an 87-page index of articles and 38-page index of illustrations (typescript reproduction, but cloth covers; University of Florida Press, \$7.50).

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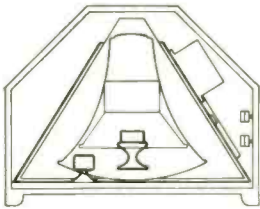
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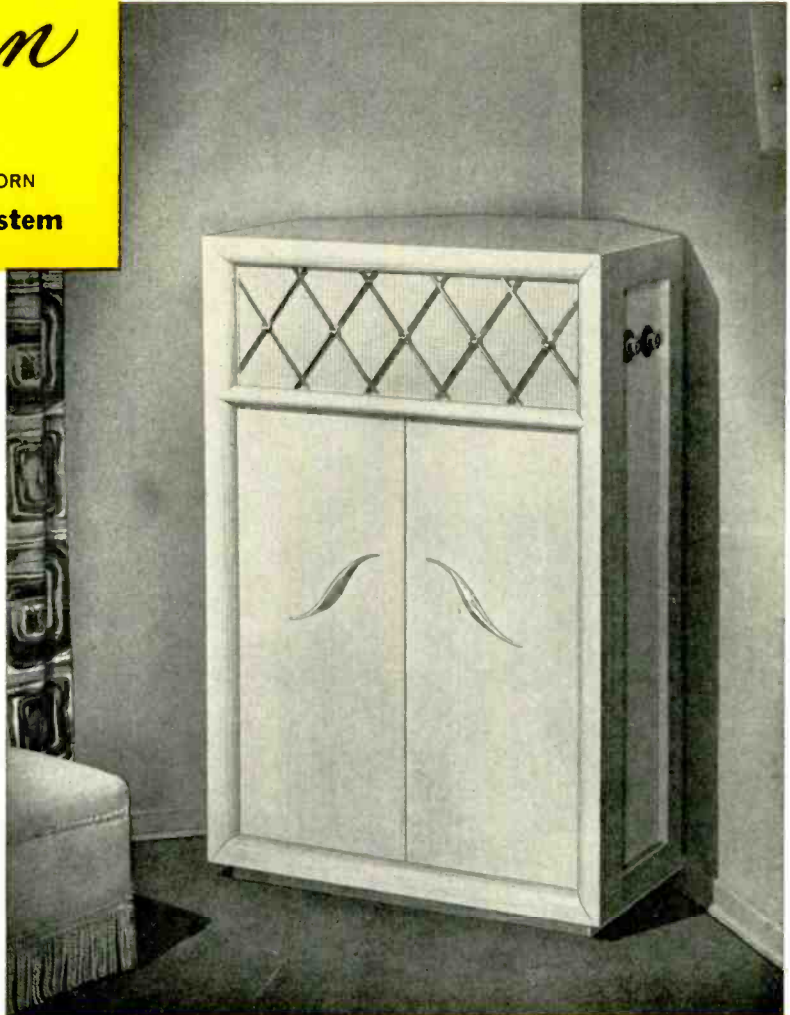
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AS THE EDITORS SEE IT

FROM TIME TO TIME this magazine has been accused of being "against" tape, as a medium of recorded music and other sonic entertainment. This is a preposterous thesis if we ever heard one, and we've heard a good many. Nevertheless, we take some slight pride in the accusation.

Its burthen would seem to be either (a) that we are troglodytic mossbacks who, out of pure cussedness, oppose progress in aural delectation or, (b) that we are in sinister league with disk-record companies, who fear the onset of tape. We don't oppose progress; we just have an uncomfortable habit of scrutinizing it pretty carefully before starting to cheer. And if we are in sinister league with anyone, it is not with manufacturers of disk records or of preamplifiers, but with our readers. The customers.

Perhaps we have irked some people in the tape business by refusing ever to say, or even to imply, that the prime component in the new fi-fancier's first rig should be a tape recorder. But we couldn't say it because we didn't believe it. We still don't. It remains a fact that in tape recorders, mechanical and electronic performance comparable to that obtainable from disk playback equipment, costs—face it—a lot of money. But we are pleased to be able at least to qualify this criticism. It appears that the market is going to offer now a welcome compromise, in the form of playback-only machines which can combine ruggedness and reasonable economy. We aren't cheering yet; but if you can detect a gentle glow of approval up in the hills, it probably emanates from us.

Inseparable from the problem of the recorder and playback machine—especially the latter—is that of recorded tape repertoire and price. Frankly, until recently, we would not have been able to recommend even a durable, inexpensive playback machine as a good buy, because there hasn't been anything to play on it, except for people with friends equipped to copy FM programs off the air. Prerecorded tape has been in scant supply. Most of what there was wasn't good, either musically or sonically. And of what was good, much was weirdly assorted—scraps of Haydn and Hindemith, Aaron Copland and Stephen Foster. And all of it cost twice as much on tape as it would have on disks.

Substantial changes are at hand now. We've seen the catalogues, and we've even heard a few tapes. There is major stuff coming, and in large quantities. We cannot say that the companies plan exactly to *give* their tapes away. The prices are still high. But we are confident that as sales mount, prices will come down. They won't drop to disk level, because it is more expensive to make a tape-record than a disk-record, but they'll come down somewhat.

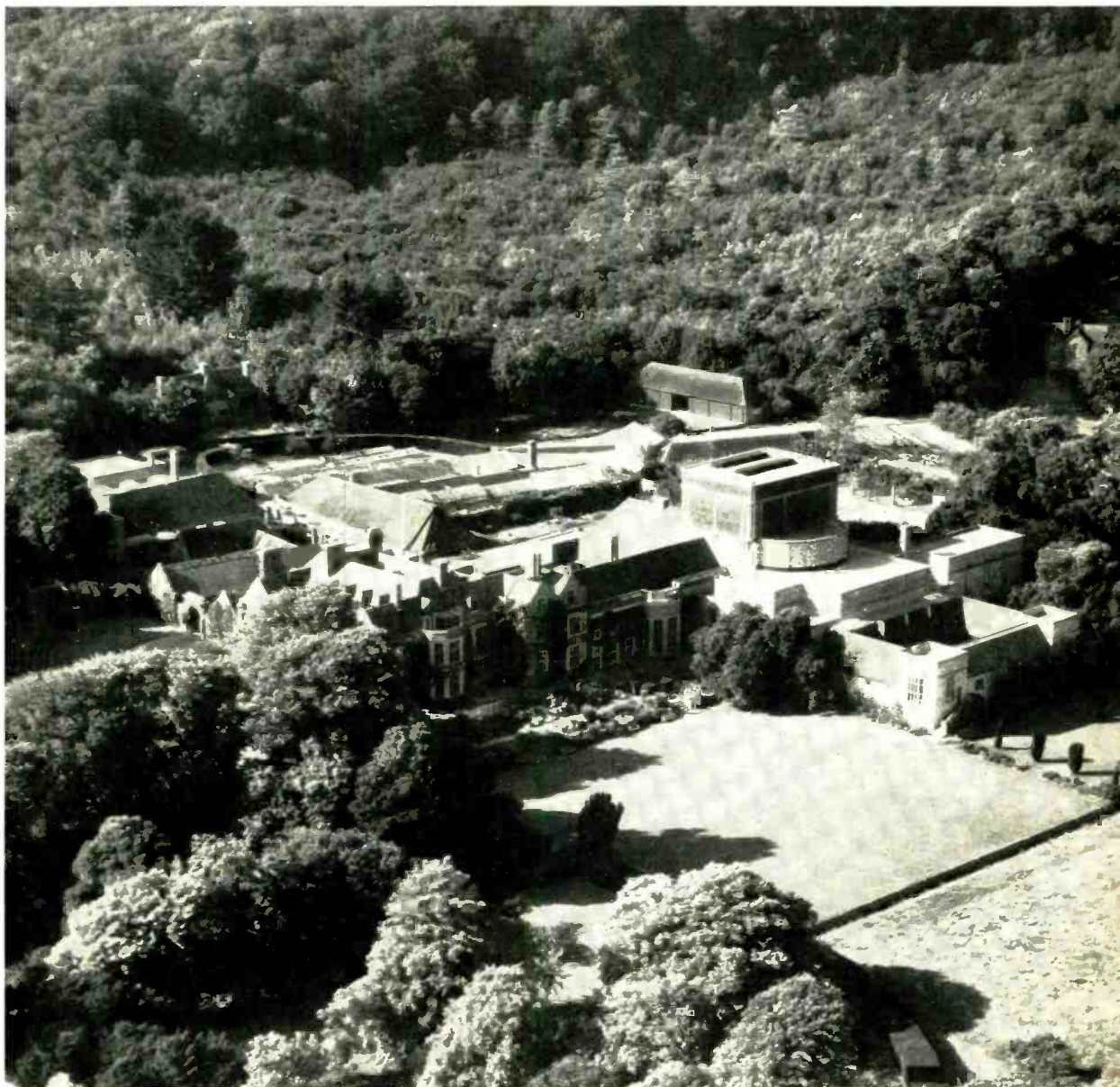
All this is by way of calling attention to a new column we will present from this issue onward. It is titled "The Tape Deck" and is written by R. D. Darrell, who has long been a tape enthusiast—a *sane* tape enthusiast. He describes his plans and purposes better on page 101 than I could here. Suffice it to say that he will discuss problems—of the industry and the individual tape fancier—as well as review recorded tape. (He dislikes the term "pre-recorded," and so do I.) How complete his coverage will be will depend on how rapidly the recorded tape companies begin to act like grown-up businesses. Most do not do so yet, which is not surprising. They have not discovered the need to send out release lists, price information, and review copies. They have not learned to package professionally, nor are they aware of the desirability of jacket notes and instructions. These things will come.

We do not expect the recorded tape to sweep the disk from the market now, or perhaps ever. The disk is too convenient, among other things. But there are special areas where we *do* expect speedy progress. Stereophonic recording, in particular, should spurt enormously in popularity when an adequate taped repertoire develops (this is perhaps analogous to the color TV situation), and when there is enough standardization to give prospective buyers adequate assurance. We will keep an eye on developments, and report them as they happen.

Indeed, a little later in the season, we will offer the findings of a very practiced eye, that of the noted audio consultant, C. J. LeBel, who, as vice-president of Audio Devices, Inc., (tape *and* disks) probably is better qualified than anyone else in the nation to write "The Case of the Tape versus the Disk"—which is why we asked him to do so.

MEANWHILE, there is a problem, strangely neglected heretofore, which affects tape only in an industrial sense but affects your disk music very directly. It is that of pitch, or speed-control, in recording. Members of this staff, early this winter, experimenting with a pitchpipe, a piano, and four new, de luxe albums of a great musical work, discovered that not one of them, in process from microphone through tape to disk, had been kept at exact speed and pitch—or anywhere near it. To discover the scope and seriousness of this problem, we put to work a man with the learning, equipment, and interest to investigate it properly: Fritz A. Kuttner, whose writings on allied subjects have appeared in these pages. His detailed report, to run in three installments, begins in June. We don't know if it will amaze you, but it amazed us.

J.M.C.



CREDIT: AERO PICTORIAL LTD.

IT IS THE MOMENT of a summer's day when the sun, after hours in the south, suddenly shows in the west and the scent of evening creeps imperceptibly over the gentle Sussex countryside. Stroll lazily about the leafy lanes and you will come, perchance, upon a herd of cows—not any ordinary herd for, as you will notice from their intent expressions, these are intelligent, sensitive animals. You seem to catch an inkling of music, there, just the other side of the hedgerow. Take another look at the cows. They are without a doubt the most musically cultured cows alive, for the fields they graze surround Glyndebourne and this is the only opera house in the world where cows can drop by to listen. Certainly they are outside the precincts, but what are doors and walls against the effervescence of Mozart? And if they do not actually hear the music, they will sense still the romantic impulse which brought opera to the Sussex Downs in the first place and also the sustained artistic dedication which has made Glyndebourne the only home of a recognizable operatic style in the United Kingdom.

John Christie, who was once a schoolmaster at Eton, married in 1931 a soprano named Audrey Mildmay, who was then singing with the Carl Rosa Opera Company. As a wedding present he decided to build, on to his sizeable country house at Glyndebourne, a theater for the production of operas in which she might sing. The first public performance took place on May 28,

helpful to review immediately the ideals for which the Christies worked from the start. They sought to banish the conception, which between the wars had again become prevalent, of opera as a vehicle for virtuoso singing. Their aim was opera as an absolute art form in itself, with equal emphasis on singing, acting, and orchestral playing, according to the Wagnerian principle. Poor Wagner had to compromise, because singers with the vocal capacity for his operas frequently lacked the physical appearance implied in their parts; but no such incongruities are permitted at Glyndebourne, where, by a judicious choice of works (this was originally limited by the size of the stage) they make their opera convincing both visually and aurally.

At the outset they plumped for Mozart. It was an encouraging coincidence that his operas not only offered them boundless scope in the field on which they wished to concentrate in their crusade for a balanced musical stage work—namely, clearly characterized roles, singable melodies, and glowing opportunities for the orchestra—but were also rich in the light soprano parts, notably Susanna and Zerlina, which came easily within the compass of Audrey Mildmay's delicate voice and which suited her temperament as an actress.

The plan then was for opera purified and revived by a balance of the dramatic, the vocal, and the orchestral elements. The medium through which this could be attained

Opera on the Sussex Downs

Time stands still, and music reigns, in Britain's lovely Glyndebourne.

by A. R. P. WRATHALL

1934, when the *Marriage of Figaro* was given to a sceptical audience in an auditorium of three hundred seats. Since then a succession of significant achievements has raised the Glyndebourne Opera to the highest plane of festival music-making. Today it attracts professional musicians and discriminating opera-lovers by virtue of its stylistic integrity while, for less exalted reasons, the charming and unorthodox ritual which is an evening in this enchanted place makes a visit one of the fashionable diversions of socialites during the London season.

Lest it should be thought that the success of Glyndebourne has been the fortuitous outcome of a rich man's whimsey, it will be

was the ensemble, whose members recognized the majesty of the total performance in relation to their individual contributions. This policy excluded the temperamental artist with an independent streak and countenanced no protocol, either on or off the stage. Likewise, the producer, conductor, and stage designer, in directing the ensemble, also had to work with a common purpose. It is still the custom that conductors and the producer stay in Christie's house during the season, while the singers—whatever their standing—the orchestra, and the technicians are quartered in the neighborhood. This rule has created an unstrained, friendly atmosphere in which re-



hearsals can proceed apace and smoothly. The peaceful Sussex Downs are, besides, infinitely more conducive to the re-creation of beautiful music than the wilderness of an urban opera house. Finally, in the midst of it all, there has been the moving spirit of John Christie and, until her death in 1953, of his wife. Theirs was the dream, but in its realization they were helped by two outstanding men of opera, Fritz Busch and Carl Ebert.

At the time when Busch was asked to take charge of the music at Glyndebourne he was little known in England, though in Europe he had a peerless reputation. He came from a musical family—the violinist Adolf Busch and the Cellist Hermann Busch being his brothers—and up to 1914 he learned the standard orchestral and choral repertoire, first at the Cologne Conservatory and then as *kapellmeister* in various German towns. After the war he became musical director at Stuttgart, where conducting opera was included among his artistic duties. While he doubted at first that opera could ever mean to him as much as absolute music for orchestra and for chamber groups, he worked to extend the range of his company. He was fortunate in that the restlessness of the postwar era had awakened public interest in new or neglected works. His years at Stuttgart saw a Verdi revival which spread throughout Germany, and the operas of composers like Pfitzner and Hindemith were often mounted. Busch became aware of the importance of the producer in opera and he also developed an interest in experimental lighting and stage effects.

Then he moved to Dresden, a more sophisticated, if complacent, city boasting a lively musical tradition, an orchestra of 130 pieces, and a beautiful opera house containing the latest technical equipment. Busch stayed there ten years. Strauss and Busoni entrusted their latest works to him; he introduced Menuhin to Germany at a Dresden concert; he visited America *als gast*; he conducted at Bayreuth. Yet, so far as opera was concerned, Busch never found a producer with both the imagination and the unqualified authority to revive standard works by means of a vital, new approach—never, that is, until he worked with Carl Ebert on *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Salzburg in 1932. There followed, at Ebert's opera house in Berlin, a fabulous production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* and each man had suddenly found the artistic partner with whom plans for refurbishing opera could be carried through.

Busch was instrumental in bringing Ebert to Glyndebourne, when both left Germany because their conception of art could not be reconciled with the cultural schemes of the Nazis. Hitler sent for them to return, but in vain, for they had found personal liberty in England and an artistic sanctuary at Glyndebourne.

Ebert had worked with Max Reinhardt, the foremost German exponent of Stanislavsky's theory that an actor must live with his part. Ebert was himself an actor and producer, and had founded an academy of dramatic art in Berlin. As a schoolboy he feasted on music purveyed by

Nikisch, Weingartner, Walter, Strauss, and a multitude of celebrated performers. At Darmstadt he controlled, for four years, opera, drama, and concerts given concurrently in two houses. In 1931, he was called to the municipal opera in Berlin as artistic director *and* general administrator—an extraordinary tribute to his powers. He remained there until his resignation.

Thoroughly grounded in the mechanics of the theater and sensitive to the best in the traditional and modern styles, Ebert was splendidly equipped for his part at Glyndebourne. Since 1934, he has founded the Turkish National Theater and Opera, and dramatic schools on two continents. He still produces opera in Europe, but gives Glyndebourne pride of place and returns annually. In the case of Stravinsky's *Rake's Progress*, Ebert was responsible for the world première at Venice and subsequently took the work to Glyndebourne. He often joins in performances of *Die Entführung* as Selim.

After high summer in Sussex, the operas are frequently taken to the Edinburgh Festival (though not this year as the season extends to August, in honor of Mozart). In 1954 they went further afield. Ebert was appointed Intendant of the Stadtische Oper in West Berlin and, knowing the local temperament to be imaginative but solid, he prepared his patrons for a leavening of their diet by giving the Glyndebourne *Cenerentola* twice before his repertory season started. It was a delightful shock for them, a piece of glittering thistledown making a myth of operatic gravity. Berlin in an evening remembered that *opera buffa* is legitimate opera, and the welter of curtain calls revealed appreciation of both the delicious ensemble and the exquisite delicacy of the production as a whole. (I have mixed my metaphors madly here; the '54 *Cenerentola* still produces the unsettling effect of sheer dazzlement.)

Another personality connected with Glyndebourne, also from the earliest days, was Rudolf Bing, the present director of the Metropolitan. For two seasons he was the foreign agent; then he became general manager. All the way through to 1949, when Bing left, Glyndebourne was controlled by the Christies, Busch, Ebert, and Bing.

Twenty-three different operas have been produced, including the seldom-given original version of *Ariadne*. Many have appeared several seasons running and *Così fan tutte* this year will be the fourteenth production of the opera that was Fritz Busch's favorite. Glyndebourne was forced to close its doors in 1940 after John Gielgud had mounted *The Beggar's Opera* (Audrey Mildmay was Polly and Michael Redgrave, the actor, sang Macheath) as a patriotic rejoinder to the drone of bombers from another opera-loving nation which passed overhead using the house as a landmark, without understanding the full import of the liberty thus taken. In 1946 the cobwebs were swept away by Britten's *Rape of Lucretia*, given again in the following season that was half Glyndebourne and half the English Opera Group.



Sena Jurinac in *Ariadne*.

These two works aside, Carl Ebert produced every opera at Glyndebourne until his son and pupil, Peter, first flew solo with Busoni's brief and lively *Alecchino*,* the pathfinder for *Ariadne* in 1954. This year is all Mozart; Ebert senior produces four operas and his son takes charge of *Die Entführung* and *Don Giovanni*. The tradition is being handed on, but Carl Ebert is still, as ever, producer-in-chief.

This goes some way toward explaining how Glyndebourne has built up a personal style of its own. Year by year, there was continuity as well as progress in Ebert's approach to the problems of production. And there was Busch, always, on the rostrum, and between them they fitted newcomers into existing productions without disrupting the ensemble. To have worked with them on a new presentation—for instance, *Macbeth*, which, in the fifth season (1938) was the first non-Mozart work heard at Glyndebourne—must have been an inspiring experience. Each man brought to his work not only an intellectual wisdom and an interpretative imagination but also a humanity deepened by pain over the tragedy of Germany. Since Fritz Busch's death in 1951, the same understanding has to a varying degree been reached between Ebert and other conductors; perhaps most beneficially, through the agency of Rossini, in *Cenerentola*, *Il Barbiere*, and *Le Comte Ory* when Vittorio Gui conducts. There is certainly time enough for producer and conductor to get acquainted. Two seasons ago, six operas were given, of which three were revivals with an almost identical cast of productions from the previous year. All the singers knew their parts before arriving, yet the three-hour rehearsals numbered 221, no less. In the light of such industry, the price of six or nine dollars a seat is chicken feed.

Many people no doubt first encountered Glyndebourne through the records made by the 1936 cast. The recordings admittedly sound dated, but the performances have a positive value which is more than merely historical. Compare the recent recorded versions of *Don Giovanni* with the earlier Glyndebourne, now more enjoyable still on LP. The new recordings carry star-spangled casts and many are their vocal and orchestral felicities, but one gets an impression of each-musician-for-himself, which may suit some tastes, but not mine. The quiet, poised assurance of the Glyndebourne set seems, however, to go deeper into the work. Audrey Mildmay, Brownlee, and Von Pataky sing winningly and act with their voices, while in the menacing *Or sai chi l'onore*, taken by Busch at a stately pace, Ina Souez compels one to believe that she is out for blood.

The standards which are set at Glyndebourne have been amply discussed already. Suffice it to say that they are maintained so that, as the opera proceeds, in an evening at Glyndebourne, the confidence of the performers in one another communicates itself to the audience. There is no stiffness in the doings. One is a guest being entertained by Mr. Christie in his own home.

Earlier in the afternoon, one's fellow-listeners in evening dress, had left London by special train for Lewes, county town of Sussex and rich in historical associations back to William the

Continued on page 123

*Premiered in Dresden under Busch.



Scenes . . . in the gardens, and from Rossini's *Comte Ory*. On the terrace . . . the late Fritz Busch, founder John Christie, Carl Ebert, and general manager Moran Caplat.



KRONBORG CASTLE, DENMARK. FRANCES A. NEWBURY

Summer Music in Europe -- 1956

by Joan Griffiths

THIS SUMMER, in Europe, she — and he — shall have music wherever they go. The fortunate traveler by private car who dares to forgo the highways for the byways will find all kinds of delights for the ear — and for the eye too — in such folk spectacles as the midsummer night celebrations in Scandinavia with the great bonfires burning along the dramatically beautiful lakes and fjords during the spectacular sunlit Northern night; in the vividly colorful local feast days of the Catholic countries with their processions, singing, and dancing in honor of village patron saints; and everywhere, from cathedral to mountain chapel, in liturgical music of endless variety. This listing is by no means complete; the tourist in Iceland, in Luxembourg, in Yugoslavia, and in the newly glamorous principality of Monaco will hear sweet strains, often indigenous ones, there too. And every prospective traveler should, as the brochures say, consult with his travel agent or with the official government tourist bureau of the country concerned for specific dates and places, and for details on such essential matters as costs, accommodations, etc. An invaluable source of such information and a veritable fountain of helpful hints is the office of the European Travel Commission, 295 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York. To the traveler, we wish a most hearty *bon voyage*; and on the stay-at-home (like ourselves) we bestow our benison and hope that this compilation may spur his will next year to hear the flutes of Arcady.

SCANDINAVIA

Earliest in the season of the European summer musical festivals is the Scandinavian Festival which is planned to take advantage of the period (May 17 - June 18) when the northern days are at their most brilliant and stretch longest into the night.

In Denmark, at Copenhagen and nearby, from May 17 through May 31 takes place the Royal Danish Ballet and Music Festival. The Royal Danish Symphony and other orchestras will perform at the new Concert Hall of the famous Tivoli Gardens and at the Radio Broadcasting House. The Royal Theatre Opera will offer *Die Zauberflöte* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. On May 20 at Frederiksborg Castle Church (Hillerød) Finn Viderø will present a concert on the famous 1610 Compenius organ. On May 26 in the afternoon Mogens Wøldike will lead a concert by the Copenhagen Boys' Choir in the Maria Church at Elsinore; and in the evening at the ancient Kronborg Castle (where legend has it Hamlet debated whether to be or not to be) the Hafnia Octet will play works of Mozart and Carl Nielsen on a program which will also offer cembalo music by Herman D. Koppel and Shakespeare songs by Niels Brincker. On May 29 in the garden of the Museum of Arts and Crafts the wind section of the Royal Symphony will present a serenade concert including works by Mozart, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. The visitor to Denmark later in the season (June 15, 16) will have an opportunity to hear and see the 3,500 participants of the International Workmen's Song Association in their choir meeting at Aalborghallen in Aalborg. And July 12 - 16 are chamber music weeks, when the best-known Danish ensembles perform at Hindsgavl Castle at Middelfart. Travelers in Denmark who had the opportunity of seeing in America members of the Royal Danish Ballet in their appearances here last year will look forward to seeing the whole *corps de ballet* during the festival season.

In Finland the Sibelius Festival will be held in Helsinki from June 9 to June 18, with programs being given by the British Broadcasting Corporation Symphony Orchestra and various Scandinavian aggregations. The International Song and Music Festival will take place at Turku (June 29 - July 1) with three thousand singers expected to participate.

Norway holds its Bergen International Festival, May 25 - June 7. There will be presented orchestral concerts by the Bergen Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carl Garaguly and the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sir Malcolm Sargent, with music ranging from Mozart to Khachaturian. Concerts of Sacred Music with the Icelandic Choir (Karlakór Reykjavíkur) conducted by Sigidur Thordarson will also be given. Boris Sirpo will direct concerts by the Little Chamber Orchestra; and recitals of the music of Edvard Grieg, with a variety of soloists, will as usual be presented at Grieg's own home "Trolldhaugen." One of the unique features of the Bergen Festival will be the performance of the first concerto ever written for

the Hardanger fiddle—a Norwegian instrument—composed by the Norwegian Geirr Tveitt.

This year's music festival in Sweden (June 3 - 13) will have among its visitors a particularly distinguished lady in the person of Queen Elizabeth II of England, who with King Gustav Adolf and Queen Louise is expected to attend the concert of the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sir Malcolm Sargent at the Stockholm Concert House on June 13. Ordinary citizens with fewer official engagements will, however, have much greater opportunity than the Queen to satisfy their desire for music, both ancient and modern. The BBC orchestra will give two performances, the first on June 12 devoted to the work of Sibelius and the second including Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. A program of eighteenth-century opera, drama, and divertissement will be presented at the Drottningholm Theatre—Mozart's *La Finta Semplice*, Pergolesi's *Il Maestro di Musica*, and excerpts from eighteenth-century Italian opera by the singing group I Cadetti della Scala Milano being among the features planned. Chamber music will be performed in the House of the Nobility, the Waldemarsudde Palace of the Painter-Prince Eugen, the Royal Exchange, the National Art Gallery, and the Museum of History. At the Royal Opera House entirely new productions of *Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Die Meistersinger*, as well as the Swedish opera *Singoalla*, will be staged. Performances of ballet and drama will also mark the festival.

During the same period, the International Society for Contemporary Music will also hold its world meeting in Stockholm. As part of its program, the Society will offer twenty-seven compositions from nineteen countries, including two works by Swedish composers, Roger Sessions' *Idyll of Theocritus*, and a piano concert by the American Alexei Haieff.

THE BRITISH ISLES

The most spectacular musical event in England during the summer months is almost certainly the Glyndebourne Festival which A. R. P. Wrathall discusses elsewhere in this issue. But in the lovely English countryside music of a different sort may be heard in many places: at Aldeburgh (June 16 - 24) which offers a festival of music and other arts; at Haselmere (July 14 - 21) where early music will be celebrated; at Shrewsbury (August 15, 16) where a music and floral fête will be held; and at Gloucester (September 2 - 8) where the Three Choirs Festival will take place. And those particularly interested in choral music will not wish to miss the Welsh *eisteddfods*, at Llangollen (July 10 - 15) and, later, at Aberdare (August 6 - 11).

Before the peak of the tourist season is reached (May 6 - 21) there is held throughout all Ireland the festival, An Tóstal, offering an extremely varied program of cultural and sporting events. Of special interest to the music-seeker might be the International Choral Festival at Cork and the Festival of Grand Opera at Dublin. For the out-of-season visitor at the end of the summer, Ireland also

offers the Wexford Festival of Music and the Arts, (October 28 - November 4), which includes orchestral concerts, opera, and drama.

In Scotland, the Tenth International Festival will be held at Edinburgh, from August 19 to September 8, providing performances of opera, chamber music, orchestral music, drama, and ballet. Among the more interesting productions scheduled are the first British performance of Stravinsky's *Oedipus and Mavra* and that of Cornelius' *Der Barber von Bagdad*, by the Hamburg State Opera. *Die Zauberflöte* and *Salome* will also be presented. The Royal Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, The BBC Scottish Orchestra—under Beecham, Munch and Monteux, and Ian Whyte respectively—will also appear. Soloists will include Dame Myra Hess, Casadesu, Curzon, and Isaac Stern. Devotees of the dance may see there the Sadlers' Wells Ballet and the Ram Gopal Indian Ballet, while cinema addicts take time out for the famous Edinburgh film festival. A spectacular military tattoo will be staged within the precincts of famed Edinburgh Castle, floodlit for the occasion, featuring the pipe-and-drum corps of noted Scottish regiments, massed military bands, and authentic Highland dancing.

CENTRAL EUROPE

In Germany this year there will be about two hundred Mozart festivals celebrated (see HIGH FIDELITY, January 1956), one of the more interesting to take place in the baroque city of Ludwigsburg, in one of the most celebrated German Rococo palaces. Karl Münchinger *Continued on page 114*

Chamber music concerts will be played in Grieg's house, "Troidhaugen," near Bergen.



Is this the tweeter in your future?

The Electrostatic Speaker

by JOHN H. NEWITT

Mr. Newitt, an M.I.T. researcher best-known as author of High Fidelity Techniques, here describes and evaluates the American examples of today's most revolutionary loudspeaker development.

IT IS RARE indeed that one has the opportunity to introduce something really new. The *basic* idea of the electrostatic speaker is not new, although the embodiment of the electrostatic principle in a practical engineering design of high fidelity character is very new. The principle of operation, the construction, and the operating requirements are entirely different from those of the dynamic speaker. About the only thing that the electrostatic loudspeaker has in common with other loudspeakers is that as an end result it sets particles of air in motion to produce sound. Even the diaphragm, if we may call it that for the moment, is quite unlike that in conventional loudspeakers.

When we compare an entirely new type of loudspeaker with an established system, many new considerations will be injected into such a discussion sooner or later. Without a basic understanding of both systems, and of the relative advantages and disadvantages of each, the average non-technical reader would be beset by a seeming series of contradictions. The following is intended to enlighten him without getting him involved in the highly technical engineering details.

Only a few ways are known in which electrical impulses can be changed into sound waves. Very basically, of course, the loudspeaker form of transducer must make use of an electric motor, if the term is not confusing. This motor, instead of rotating, must produce mechanical thrust-and-pull motions which correspond closely to the electrical impulses supplied to it. If the resultant motion is utilized to set particles of air in motion, sound will be produced. Since the moving parts of the motor—the voice-coil assembly—are usually small, it is customary to have the

motor actuate some large-surfaced device, such as a diaphragm, which can act on large quantities of air. Fidelity in such a device is the measure of accuracy with which the mechanism (including the whole of the diaphragm) follows the applied electrical wave-form. If equal units of diaphragm movement are produced by equal units of electrical energy, a *linear* condition exists and distortionless sound will be produced. There are many reasons why good linearity is *not* realized in practice, particularly with in-expensive units.

To evaluate a particular loudspeaker design for high fidelity purposes it is important to first examine the factors which could adversely affect linearity, and then to see just what has been done to correct them. To begin with, the voice coil of the dynamic speaker must always operate in a homogenous flux field if the mechanism is to respond in a linear manner.

There are also purely mechanical hazards. If the diaphragm of the speaker is too flexible, the outer portions of it cannot follow the rapid motion of the voice coil at higher frequencies, and a common condition known as "breakup" will then exist. Breakup means that the diaphragm is vibrating in two or more modes (different portions of the diaphragm are doing different things), and such a condition gives rise to distortion. If the diaphragm is made heavier and thicker to resist breakup, the high frequency response will be impaired since the cone then will be too heavy to be able to vibrate at high frequencies. Because of this and other such limiting factors, a single loudspeaker structure cannot usually be made to cover the complete audio range while maintaining extremely low values of distortion.

The dynamic speaker's movement comes from the reaction between the varying magnetic field in the voice coil and the constant magnetic field around it (from the speaker's magnet). The resulting movement is inherently linear. Similarly, the push-pull electrostatic speaker utilizes a constant bias which establishes an electrostatic field against which the signal component can react. (This I will explain later.) The constant fields in both cases are the basis for the inherent linearity of the devices.

While both the dynamic speaker and the electrostatic mechanism are inherently linear, some differences do exist from this consideration onward. The dynamic speaker mechanism must usually drive its diaphragm from a single point, and this gives rise to the possibility of breakup, as previously mentioned. The electrostatic speaker consists



Pickering's tweeter radiates from a single curved diaphragm.

of a diaphragm suspended between two electrodes, the latter being in the shape of grilles or screens, permeable to sound. Thus the electrostatic speaker drives its diaphragm uniformly over its entire surface, and there is no likelihood of breakup in a properly designed unit. From a practical standpoint, the electrostatic speaker seems to be unsuitable for reproducing frequencies below about 500 cycles, because of the fact that large amplitudes of diaphragm-movement are required at low frequencies, and this involves serious electrode spacing problems. The dynamic speaker, on the other hand, is remarkably well suited to low frequency reproduction. Its distortion can be held to negligible values when it is operated below one or two thousand cycles. Further, it is well adapted to handle large amounts of power (most audio power in music is in the bass range) since it can move through large excursions with excellent linearity. The dynamic speaker runs into serious difficulty only in the middle and high end of the audio range.

To appreciate fully the advantages of the electrostatic design, it might be well to consider some of the problems inherent in the dynamic tweeter. To produce high frequencies and to avoid breakup, a small stiff diaphragm is required. Small diaphragm surfaces unfortunately represent a small radiation surface, and to put forth real volume, either several direct radiator units must be used or some acoustical amplifying device be employed—a horn, for instance. Horns have been almost universally accepted as tweeter components. The horn structure acts as a "coupler" between the very small diaphragm of a dynamic driver unit and the air of the room. The mouth of the horn represents the effective radiating surface (acts like a large diaphragm), while the actual moving structure may be confined to the small opening represented by the throat. The diaphragm of the horn driver unit sometimes consists simply of a disk or dome covering the end of the voice coil, and is small enough so that it can be very stiff and yet quite light in weight. While this structure will certainly avoid breakup with good design, other difficulties do arise. The horn structure is subject to acoustic cancellations in the throat area unless all portions of the diaphragm surface are equidistant from the opening of the throat. It is difficult to eliminate such cancellation entirely, although much has been done (by the use of annular acoustic plugs) to try to keep the diaphragm-to-throat spacing reasonably even over the range. Some of the better tweeter horns embody a remarkable job of compensation, but there are many tweeters that should rightfully be called "screechers," since they radiate sound intensely at several discrete frequencies over their range of operation, with little output at intermediate points.

With the electrostatic speaker, smoothness of response is inherent. The diaphragm is in reality a very thin membrane, so light as to have virtually no reactive force whatsoever. It is not connected to any heavy motor structure but is merely suspended from a frame and driven directly by electrostatic force. Mechanical problems of massive moving structures and stiffening to avoid breakup are non-existent. In fact the device operates almost as if it had no diaphragm, but were simply pushing the air.



Four separate radiating cells are used in the Janszen 1-30 unit.

It is never operated near its major resonant point, so this factor is not of concern.

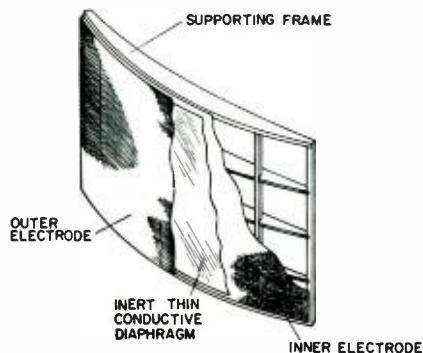
The electrostatic speaker is actually, then, a direct radiator of large diaphragm surface, which is not subject to breakup or resonance effects over its intended range of operation. The units I've seen have, in fact, an exceptionally smooth response over the very wide range of 500 cps to above audibility.

A review of the foregoing data leads one to the conclusion that a dynamic woofer and an electrostatic tweeter should form a most desirable combination, and I think this is true. I cannot comment on British electrostatic woofers, since, though I have heard well of them, I have not seen one yet.*

The blending of the electrostatic tweeter and the dynamic woofer into a system naturally requires that they have approximately equal output, so that balance can be maintained. Fortunately, the type of electrostatic speaker described in this article very closely matches the output of some present day high quality woofers.

For the best direct match, leading manufacturers recommend the use of a good low efficiency woofer. Low efficiency in a woofer commonly implies heavy mechanical damping and a broadened and smoothed response in the lower audio range, around the vicinity of mechanical resonance. Damping in a loudspeaker acts to reduce the severity of the peaks and valleys in the response characteristic at low frequencies and, in addition, acts to extend the range of uniform response. In particular, it makes the speaker less responsive at resonance and more responsive to adjacent frequencies. With the electrostatic speaker it is important that the woofer have a very smooth response from 1,000 cps to the very low end of the range.

*We shall print a report on one British all-range electrostatic speaker system in June.—Ed.

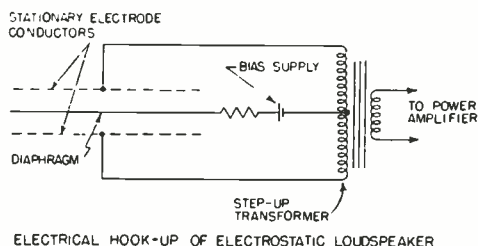


Generally, it might be stated that a speaker system does not necessarily have to have a flat characteristic, but it should have a smooth one. A gradual rising or falling characteristic is easy to compensate for electrically. If the rising or falling characteristic over the range of operation is not smooth, and is beset with many peaks and valleys, compensation cannot be made.

THE ELECTROSTATIC SPEAKER is essentially a form of capacitor, or electrical condenser, while the dynamic speaker is essentially an inductive contrivance. The former is a high-voltage low-current device (a voltage-operated device), whereas the dynamic speaker is a low-voltage high-current device (a current-operated device). This means that the impedances of the two are vastly different, and matching to an amplifier may involve problems.

If we are to make a loudspeaker which is basically a capacitor, we must provide certain features which are not normally present in commercial capacitors. One such requirement would be that one of the plates be elastically suspended so that it could move under the influence of the electrostatic force set up by the signal. The dielectric (insulation between the plates) in such a device will be mostly air—space in which movement can take place. A single-sided design (a single fixed plate and a movable one) was employed in the early days of radio, and its shortcomings led to the present design, in which a movable plate (the diaphragm) is placed midway between two fixed plates. Such a system operates in a push-pull manner. The electrical arrangement for such a structure, for whoever may be interested, is equivalent to two capacitors connected in series. This then comprises a three-wire device where the center connection (movable plate) is common to the other two. For high fidelity results it was not only necessary to resort to a push-pull structure, it was also necessary to provide an operating bias in order to create a homogenous static field against which the signal component could react.

In the case of our push-pull capacitor, the outer two plates must be of an open-mesh construction if sound is to escape. For good efficiency, the mesh sections of the two outer plates must be carefully aligned (to give maximum capacity for a given spacing) and they must have highly plane surfaces which are exactly parallel, to insure even action over the diaphragm surfaces. This is a manufacturing problem and has been solved—in the tweeters I have seen—so that no adjustments are required during the life of the device. In a typical electrostatic tweeter



unit (see illustrations) it can be seen that the open mesh plates are formed by fixed grids of wires. The center movable plate is a thin plastic membrane which has been given a conductive coating. The movable plate is clamped at the edges, leaving its whole area free to vibrate. This makes a three-wire sound cell. In the Janszen tweeter, four such cells, together with a bias supply, matching transformer, and attenuator control, make up the complete tweeter unit. Efficiency considerations dictate that the plates should be spaced as close together as possible, without having them touch and without having the movement of the center plate restricted at its maximum expected excursion. For reasons previously given, a high voltage DC bias is required. If the wires of the stationary plates were bare under such conditions, arc-over and ozone generation would be a problem. In order to obtain the advantages of close spacing, and to avoid the disadvantages, the wires are insulated.

In the bias connection, both sides of the cell receive continuing and equal charges. The signal, however, is connected across the cell in such a way as to "push" from one stationary plate and "pull" from the other. With the static field present, as provided by the bias, the signal can act against the established field.

In this manner, non-linearities which might result from the changing proximity of the plates will not be present. When precision manufacture is employed, the static field will be homogenous and the force exerted over all portions of the diaphragm will be even and equal. Under such conditions, exceptional linearity will be obtained over a wide frequency range.

A surprisingly pleasant characteristic of the electrostatic unit is its frequency response characteristic along the axis. The response curve shows rising response over most of the frequency range. The resistive nature of an electrostatic radiator means that constant input voltage will produce constant acoustic output level over the range. If we recall that the polar radiation pattern of a loudspeaker tends to narrow when the driving frequency is increased, the constant acoustic output of the electrostatic unit will be concentrated into a narrowing beam, increasing the response on axis by 6 db/octave. A dynamic speaker's total acoustic output falls off as the frequency increases, so concentration of its output on the axis produces a flat axial response.

The rising axial response of the electrostatic system is an advantage rather than a disadvantage, since it overcomes the tendency for highs to be more readily absorbed when sounds are reflected within a room. Listening tests have not indicated the need for further treble attenuation, but when needed it is readily available from a treble tone control.

No chain is stronger than its weakest link. An electrostatic tweeter will not make a bad system into a good one. The associated equipment must measure up to the tweeter. Of woofers I have spoken already, I hope not too severely. It must be remembered though that some very excellent woofers have concentrated on problems existent at a few hundred cycles up to several thousand, to the neglect of the very low range. While these fine woofers certainly have their place, they

Continued on page 126

by Roland Gelatt

ISAAC STERN

The Rise of an American Virtuoso



AMONG POSTWAR developments in the field of music, none has been more arresting than the sudden international recognition of performers trained and matured in the United States. Throughout the world—whether it be at a recital in the Salle Gaveau, an orchestral program at the Vienna Konzerthaus, or a performance at the Teatro San Carlo—our singers and instrumentalists are playing with a high degree of competence to audiences disposed to accept them not as American musicians but simply as good musicians. Isaac Stern, a stocky and marvelously self-possessed violinist in his mid-thirties, is by far the most sought-after and peripatetic member of this considerable group. To a good many people here and abroad he is the successful American musician incarnate. Recently his status as our best-known musical property was further strengthened when the Soviet Ministry of Culture invited him to undertake his current five-week concert tour of the U.S.S.R. Whether he deserves this rather extreme distinction, whether he or another represents most worthily the success—artistic or financial—to which American musicians now may aspire, are of course legitimate and arguable points. But there is no controverting the plain facts of the case: Stern has traveled more miles, given more concerts, made more money, and won more praise than any other American-trained musician of his generation.

Stern's all-American background is qualified by only one detail: he was born in the town of Kriminiesz on the Soviet side of the Russian-Polish border. He did not remain there long. At the time of his birth, July 21, 1920, this area was embroiled in a volitant civil war, and his parents escaped from it as soon as they could. They had both come from well-to-do families and saw only a bleak future in store for the new classless society ordained in Rus-

sia. In 1921 they immigrated to the United States and settled in San Francisco, where some relatives had preceded them. Isaac was then ten months old. "My recollections of the trip," he admits, "are rather hazy."

His father's liberal arts education had been ideal for the son of an upper-class Russian *rentier*, but it did not help him much to earn a living as a house painter in San Francisco. Isaac grew up in a household where money was chronically in short supply, but where no one worried much about it. When he was six, he began learning the rudiments of piano playing from his mother, who had studied music in Russia and had for a short time attended classes at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. His progress was not great. Two years later he switched to the violin in emulation of a friend who was receiving lessons on that instrument. Isaac's aptitude for the violin was apparent immediately. His parents withdrew him from school and placed him in the hands of private tutors so that he would have more time to devote to music. "You might call me an educated illiterate," Stern says today. "Certain elements of the classic education I missed altogether and have had to make up for since." Another missing element was the normal *dolce far niente* of childhood. He had scant time for fun, though he did manage to become a fairly expert tennis player.

The expense of educating a child prodigy was, of course, far beyond the resources of Solomon Stern. But there are usually no money problems for obvious talent; almost always someone can be found to foot the bill. In Stern's case this was Miss Lutie Goldstein, an elderly and wealthy San Franciscan who interested herself in Isaac's progress and undertook to finance a great part of his education. In the course of five years, young Stern went through four violin pedagogues and found none of them satisfactory. "The

problems," he feels now, "were basically with me. I was not yet really interested in the violin." Isaac, one gathers, was made to work at his instrument whether he liked it or not. In the fall of 1933, shortly after his thirteenth birthday, Stern's attitude toward the violin suddenly changed. All at once it became the consuming interest of his life; he sensed for the first time the joy of making music and forgot the drudgery of playing notes. This metamorphosis coincided with his introduction to a new teacher, Naoum Blinder, concertmaster of the San Francisco Symphony. Under Blinder's tutelage Isaac began to make startling progress. Stern today cannot praise this teacher too highly: "He gave me a perfect grounding, put me on the road, and showed me how to teach myself."

Although he had made the rounds of musicales and private recitals customary for budding talent, Isaac Stern did not appear in a full-scale public concert until the age of fifteen. In 1935 he played the Saint-Saëns B minor Concerto at a summer concert of the San Francisco Civic Orchestra, with Willy van den Burg conducting. The next year the San Francisco Symphony celebrated its Silver Jubilee, and Stern, as a leading local prodigy, was invited to perform. He played the Brahms Concerto. Alfred Frankenstein, the *Chronicle's* new music critic, wrote that Stern "acquitted himself as brilliantly and nobly as the music requires, which is saying a very great deal. The poetic expressiveness, the technical flash, and the temperamental fire of a major performance all were there, as well as the smooth, vivid, singing tone." Word-of-mouth reports on this concert began to circulate up the West Coast, and in the next few months Stern was invited to play in Seattle, Spokane, and Vancouver.



His wife helps Stern pick out a camera. He owns dozens.

Musical reputations in America are not made on the West Coast, however, but in New York City; and having thrilled the press in Vancouver, Stern decided it was time to do the same in Manhattan. Miss Goldstein and other friends bought him a fine Guadagnini violin and commissioned NBC Artists Service to arrange the details of a Town Hall recital, which took place on October 11, 1937. He did not take New York by storm. In fact, the reviews were typical of the kind invariably accorded to unprepossessing musicians making a debut. Olin Downes spoke appreciatively of "his spirited, straightforward playing" but followed this praise with the observation that "he seldom

went far below the surface of his music, or displayed very much warmth or distinction of style." It was not a bad review, but it was not a rave. Unhappily, Stern boarded an open double-decker bus on Fifth Avenue the following morning and spent several hours riding between Washington Square and Fort Tryon Park in an attempt to assuage his rudely wounded feelings. Later on he realized that he had come to New York woefully unprepared. At most, he had given a dozen professional concerts in his whole life, and he was not yet equipped to perform before the most exacting audience in the country.

For the next sixteen months he worked at realizing those "unusual potencies as an artist" to which Downes had referred. He gave more concerts on the West Coast and thought more seriously about the special problems of playing to an audience. When he returned to New York for his second Town Hall recital, in February 1939, the press was more enthusiastic. Irving Kolodin, in the *New York Sun*, called it "violin playing of uncommon technical solidity and musical distinction," and his view was shared by the other critics who attended. As a result of these reviews, NBC Artists added Stern to its roster. Unfortunately, a home-grown violinist of nineteen did not seem to have much sales appeal. Bookings were almost nonexistent and Stern had to borrow money to keep going.

By 1940 he was ready to give up the concert field altogether and take a regular salaried job with an orchestra. But at this point an independent manager named Paul Stoes entered the picture and persuaded Stern not to give up. Stoes had confidence in Stern's ultimate box-office potentialities and he was willing to invest his time and energy in grooming him for a big career. "He gave me my basic grounding in the business end of music," says Stern, "and encouraged me to continue when I needed it most." But the immediate box-office intake was still discouragingly small — too small, indeed, to keep Stoes's independent management solvent. In 1941 he went out of business and Stern joined the exclusive company of musicians managed by Sol Hurok.

Hurok can hardly be credited with having discovered Isaac Stern, but his astute management certainly helped transform him in three years from a struggling violinist into a very successful one. The times assisted, too. The country was at war, money was plentiful, and music was unrationed. Stern had entertained hopes of entering Army Intelligence, but he turned out to be a 4F, so he diverted his energy to concert halls. Thereafter, he played with the major orchestras, and his New York recitals were now held in Carnegie Hall. There, on January 12, 1943, Stern gave a concert that seems to have been the real turning point in his career from the status of promising young man to that of accomplished artist. The next morning Sol Hurok telegraphed Isaac's parents: "Such violin playing is heard rarely, and in so young a person prophesies a long and enduring career." Even the *Herald Tribune's* hypercritical Virgil Thomson was impressed to the point where he termed Stern "one of the world's master fiddle players," though later in the review he managed to blunt this encomium by finding "a certain absence of poetic continuity" and a lack of "personal involvement" in the violinist's per-



Stern and Zakin: "I want the conception to be my own."

formances. Once the corner had been turned, there was no *rallentando* in Stern's progress. Columbia Records put him under exclusive contract in 1945. By 1947 he was, according to *Time*, playing ninety concerts a year at minimums of \$1,000 to \$1,500 a concert.

That still left 275 days unaccounted for each year, and in July 1947 Stern began filling them overseas. His first tour abroad (not counting USO missions to the Pacific during World War II) took him to Australia. The following year he made the rounds of Europe's capitals and has been going back almost annually. In 1949 he toured the South American circuit and in 1953 made his first concert tour around the world (he has since undertaken another). Except for one trip to Iceland, none of these foreign appearances has been sponsored by the United States Government. Stern would just as soon keep it this way, for he feels that "the overt adding of a political symbol to an artistic act is wrong." When he plays in Paris, or New Delhi, or Tokyo, it is as a private individual. Nonetheless, he is often regarded abroad as a musical ambassador of the United States; and the satisfaction of playing this role capably — especially before musically sophisticated Europeans — is, he says, something uniquely exhilarating.

In Antwerp one evening in 1951, just as Stern was about to go on stage, his local manager ran up to him and announced: "David Oistrakh is in the audience. He has come over from Brussels just to hear you play!" The news was not calculated to soothe Stern's nerves; but apparently he played to Oistrakh's satisfaction, for the Soviet violinist congratulated him afterward and made an appointment for lunch in Brussels the next day. They talked of many things. The Cold War was then at its height, and in the Soviet press America was being charged with committing atrocities in Korea. Even two violinists could not help reflecting the antagonisms of their respective countries; but when they came to a point of disagreement, they preferred to throw up their hands and affirm that "the world is crazy" rather than hurt each other's feelings. They parted good friends. "Come to Moscow and play for us," Oistrakh said. "I'd like to," Stern replied, "when you come to New York and play for us." Four years later Oistrakh did come to this country, and Stern — thanks to an invitation from the Soviet Union — is now in Russia fulfilling his part of the agreement.

When he is not pursuing his profession in Moscow or

Tel Aviv or Wichita or some other distant city, Stern prefers to be in Manhattan, where he has recently rented a nineteenth-floor duplex in a still-elegant Central Park West apartment house. The "parlor floor," where the Sterns entertain guests, is only about three-quarters furnished as yet; the Sterns do most of their living upstairs. Here, with a magnificent view of the city, the violinist has his studio, which includes not only the expected grand piano and music cabinet but also an elaborate high fidelity installation complete with tape recorder. The latter Stern finds useful both for studio work and off-the-air recording. In February, for example, he had his long-time accompanist, Alexander Zakin, make a taping of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony broadcast in which he was soloist in the Prokofiev Violin Concerto No. 1. The next morning he was able to analyze his performance minutely; and when he went to Columbia's Thirtieth Street studio that afternoon to record the concerto for LP, he had already anticipated many of the problems that would arise.

The high fidelity equipment is not only employed to reproduce the music-making of its owner. Stern tries to hear at least once all the important recordings in his field. "But," he adds, "when I am preparing to record a piece, I never listen to previous recorded performances of that work. I want the conception to be my own." As a matter of fact, Stern feels that he has been very little influenced by performances of other musicians, whether live or recorded. In his formative years in San Francisco he went to concerts regularly and heard such masters of his instrument as Kreisler, Szigeti, Heifetz, and Menuhin. None of them, however, served as an idol or model. Pablo Casals, with whom Stern has played on many occasions in recent years, seems to have exercised a greater influence than any of the musicians he heard in his teens. "Casals," he explains, "was a confirmation of many things I had felt and had been trying to do. My primary interest is to use the violin to play music rather than to use music to play the violin. But to achieve this there are interpretative walls that you have to climb over. Casals makes those walls disappear. He expands the limits of taste and shows that one need not necessarily get lost in the freedom of expression entailed. What I got from Casals was general, not specific. No great artist can be imitated; what he can do is to teach you an attitude."

Although Stern has likes and *Continued on page 136*



Stern (right) and Oistrakh: the Cold War was sbrugged off.

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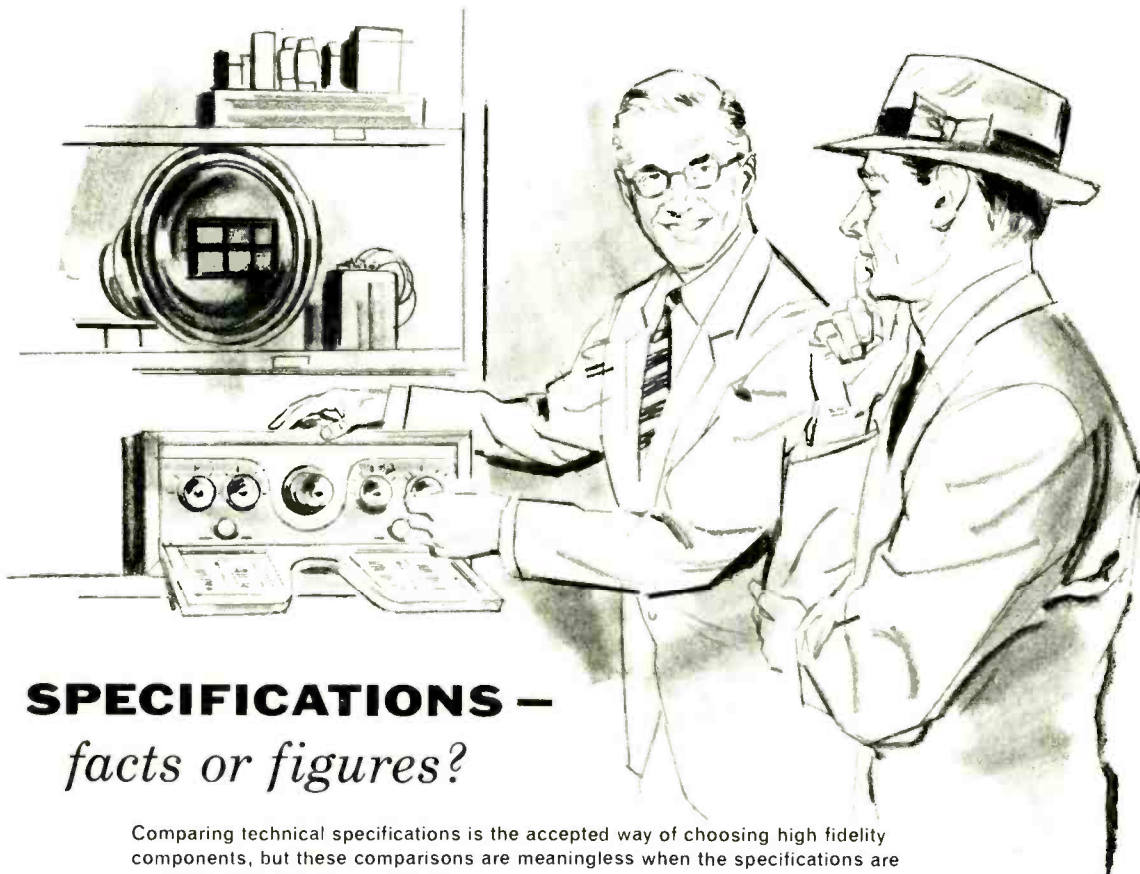
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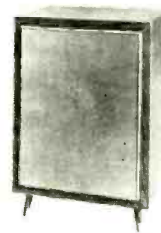
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music makers

by ROLAND GELATT

WHEN SIR THOMAS BEECHAM spoke to me in mid-February about his recording plans for the future (duly reported here in the March issue), I had the impression that he was choosing his words gingerly to avoid mention of a still-secret project. He was. At that time Sir Thomas and RCA's George Marek were discussing the possibility of a Beecham-directed recording of *La Bohème* for the Victor label. Apparently, the conductor's interest turned into real enthusiasm when he was told that the soprano Victoria de los Angeles would be available for the role of Mimi, and he agreed to go ahead if Victor's artist and repertoire department could assemble the rest of the cast and recruit an orchestra and chorus practically overnight; otherwise there would be no time to do a proper job before De los Angeles' unpostponable departure for La Scala early in April.

For the next two weeks the people at Victor concentrated on getting "Operation *La Bohème*" under way. Jussi Bjoerling, Lucine Amara, and Robert Merrill were engaged to round out the *Bohème* quartet, the New York City Opera chorus was put under contract (the Robert Shaw Chorale being out of town), and a large freelance orchestra with several distinguished first-desk men was assembled. Richard Mohr, who was in charge of the recruiting and the sessions, still finds it hard to believe that so many busy musicians were actually corralled on such short notice.

Recording began on March 16 in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Manhattan Center, a structure on Thirty-fourth Street that began its existence as Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House fifty years ago. Today it is a seedy and garish-looking establishment entirely rebuilt from top to bottom and bearing no resemblance inside or out to a grand opera house; but the large ballroom on the seventh floor has excellent acoustic properties, and it is there that RCA Victor has made many of

its recent operatic recordings. The *Bohème* sessions lasted until the very last day that De los Angeles was available, April 6. All told, thirty hours of recording time were used to tape the two-hour opera. Dick Mohr reports that Sir Thomas could not have been more efficient or co-operative and that the singers remained in excellent voice throughout the sessions—a minor miracle considering the blustery weather and the fact that all of them were also appearing concurrently either at the Metropolitan or the City Center. Jussi Bjoerling, it is true, came down with a case of sciatica when Act I was being recorded, but Beecham cheered him up with the observation that he "had never yet asked a tenor to sing with his back."

This *Bohème* (due for release in September, incidentally) will very probably be the last large-scale recording to share RCA and EMI artists. Both Sir Thomas and Victoria de los Angeles are under contract to the British company and hence will not be available to Victor after the present alliance expires. Judging from the snatches of tape I was able to sample, RCA and EMI have collaborated on a magnificent swan song.

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD said four years ago: "I am almost positive that my very last public appearance will be on December 12, 1953. The place will be the National Theater of Oslo. It was there that I made my debut just forty years before, and it is there that I think I should finish my career as a singer." It is lucky for her, and us, that she hedged a bit with that "almost"; for although Flagstad did make her "farewell appearance" in Oslo on the appointed date, she has continued since then to prolong her glorious career.

This spring Flagstad has been extraordinarily busy making recordings for Decca-London, another striking *coup* for this energetic company. In Oslo she took part in an uncut, six-LP version of *Götterdämmerung* under the

direction of Eiven Fjeldstad, with Set Svanholm as Siegfried and Egil Nordsjo as Hagen. Most of this was originally taped for broadcast on the Norwegian radio system; Decca-London later recorded the remaining portions of the score so that the LP version would be complete. Late in April, Flagstad was scheduled to begin recording Gluck's *Alceste* in London with Raoul Jobin as Admetus and Geraint Jones conducting. This too had its origins as a radio broadcast, but Decca-London will be taping all of it again in its own studio. Those who heard Flagstad's *Alceste* at the Metropolitan in 1952 will know how marvelously suited in voice and temperament this singer is to the part and how nobly she conveys the classic calm of Gluck's music.

A projected *Fidelio* featuring the Leonore of Flagstad and the conducting of Erich Kleiber collapsed because of the conductor's death. Instead, the soprano will record a program of Wagnerian excerpts with the Vienna Philharmonic under Knappertsbusch. And when she is in Vienna she *may* record as well the first act of *Die Walküre* with Mario del Monaco in the role of Siegmund. That's right, Del Monaco.

SOME OF THE GRIEVING over LP cutouts in the March Schwann catalogue appears to have been a bit premature. At RCA Victor plans are now being formulated to bring many of the condemned disks back into circulation. Watch for an announcement in June or July. Although details are still to be worked out, Victor apparently intends to set up a kind of "connoisseur service" for buyers who wish to order historically important recordings that are no longer listed in the regular Victor catalogue. So far, no word as to repertoire, but it seems pretty certain that such classics as the Lehmann-Schumann-Mayr *Rosenkavalier* and Fritz Kreisler's Mendelssohn Concerto will be given a new lease on life.

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RELEASES



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Grieg: Overture, "In Autumn" and

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Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Notes by conductor.

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HERBERT VON KARAJAN

Sibelius: Symphony No. 6 in D minor and

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Conductor: Herbert von Karajan Philharmonia

One 12" record Angel 35316

Previously released (Karajan-Philharmonia):

Sibelius: Symphony No. 4 and "Tapiola" (35082);

Symphony No. 5 and "Finlandia" (35002).

ANDRE CLUYTENS

Ravel: Menuet Antique, "Mother Goose" Suite, Introduction and Allegro (for harp, with string quartet, flute, clarinet), Valses Nobles et Sentimentales

Conductor: André Cluytens

Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française

One 12" record Angel 35173

Released (Cluytens—French National Orchestra):

Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé, Suites 1 and 2 (with Chorale

Marcel Briclot) and Alborada del Gracioso (35054);

Bolero, Pavane pour une Infant Défunte and Le

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 JOHN F. INDCOX ROBERT KOTLOWITZ HOWARD LAFAY PHILIP L. MILLER
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CLASSICAL

ALBENIZ

Cantos de España
 †Lecuona: *Andalucía (Suite Española)*

Leonard Pennario, piano.
 CAPITOL P 8319. 12-in. \$3.98.

The contents of the Albéniz suite have turned up separately on many disks — Mr. Pennario has himself previously recorded the *Seguidillas* — but are happily presented here as a unit in a coolly impeccable interpretation. The Lecuona suite, which includes the ubiquitous *Andalucía (The Breeze and I)* and *Malagueña*, is equally flawless in performance. Good, smooth tone, exceptionally clean in engineering. R. E.

ALFVEN

Midsommervaka, Op. 19: The Mountain King, Op. 37
 †Rangström: *King Eric's Songs; Divertimento elegiaco*

Royal Swedish Orchestra, Hugo Alfvén, cond. (in his own works); Stig Westerberg, cond. (in the Rangström). Erik Saedén, baritone.
 WESTMINSTER 18131. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Hugo Alfvén's *Midsommervaka (Midsummer Vigil)*, a gay piece of folklike music, has found its way into popular favor in recent years via American juke boxes, as *Swedish Rhapsody*. It has been around on LP for quite a while too, but never in such a telling, penetrating interpretation as that offered on this disk by the eighty-four-year-old composer. *The Mountain King* is a slightly more elaborate score with overtones of Richard Strauss, but it still maintains a

certain naïve simplicity that is utterly captivating.

Ture Rangström (1884-1947), the other Swedish composer represented on this appealing disk, seems — at least in his divertimento — to have a close spiritual relationship to Grieg. Perhaps he is a bit more adventurous harmonically, but his music quite definitely belongs to the Romantic era. The song cycle heard here is a fine example of straightforward lyrical writing. Spacious recording. P. A.

ALBINONI

Concertos for Oboe and Strings: in B-flat, D, F, and C, Op. 7, Nos. 3, 6, 9, 12
Concerti a cinque: in D minor and B-flat, Op. 5, Nos. 7 and 1

Pietre Pierlot, oboe; Ensemble de L'Oiseau-Lyre, Louis de Froment, cond.
 OISEAU-LYRE OL 50041. 12-in. \$4.98.

The solo writing in the oboe concertos is not as advanced as in Albinoni's Opus 9 and the compositions from Opus 5 are orchestral concertos, but all of these works have the gay vivacity — and, as in the first movement of Op. 7, No. 6, even jauntiness — characteristic of this unjustly neglected composer of the late Italian Baroque. Their smooth elegance makes for very pleasant listening. Pierlot has the thin, rather nasal tone favored by many European oboists (others, including most Americans, go in for a rounder, richer tone), but the performances have a fine verve and the recording is good. N. B.

BACH, C. P. E.

Magnificat in D

Dorothea Siebert (s); Hilde Rössl-Majdan (c); Waldemar Kmentz (t); Hans Braun (bs); Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Akademie Choir, Felix Prohaska, cond.
 VANGUARD BG 552. 12-in. \$4.98.

This fine work, written in 1749 by Johann Sebastian's second and most gifted son, has power as well as beauty. From the standpoint of style, it represents a transitional stage between the Baroque and Classic eras. Not only the big final fugue, with its elaborate polyphony, but some of the other movements show the strong influence of Philipp Emanuel's father. Other sections foreshadow the new style with its important admixture of Italian elements. The performance has some good qualities and some that are not impressive. Prohaska keeps things moving nicely. Rössl-Majdan's singing of the *Suscipit Israel* is lovely, but the other soloists are no more than adequate. The chorus does not sound like a large one, but even so it is not as clear as it might be, and the tenors are often inaudible. The recording as a whole is rather flat, as though the microphone had been placed just a little too far from the performers. N. B.

BACH, J. C.

Sinfonia in B-flat, Op. 18, No. 2
 †Dittersdorf: *Symphony in C*
 †Haydn: *Divertimento in G*
 †Mozart: *Symphony No. 14, in A, K. 114*

Chamber Orchestra of the Danish Radio, Mogens Wøldike, cond.
 LONDON LL 1308. 12-in. \$3.98.

Two men who influenced Mozart greatly — the "London" Bach and Haydn — are represented here by airy masterpieces more interesting than the sixteen-year-old's Fourteenth Symphony, which nevertheless has a fine high prance in it. The Sinfonia in B-flat is famous for its nonchalant grace, and the Haydn divertimento, or symphony with two minuets, flashes with changing colors. A step lower because less incisive, the Dittersdorf symphony is an attractive early example of the music of a composer hard to dislike.

People who remember the Mengelberg 78s will not find the same whipping stimulation in the Sinfonia as driven by Mr. Wøldike, but Mengelberg was a specialist in that piece, while the Danish conductor is a specialist in the period. He is orderly and circumspect, and commands a fine definiteness from whatever orchestra he may be leading. The record is recommended with heat as an ideal lure to music's age of positivism C. G. B.

BACH
Organ Music

Tocatta and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565; Fughetta (BWV 679) and Chorale-Prelude (BWV 635) on *Dies sind die heil'gen zehn Gebot*: Toccata and Fugue in F, BWV 540.

Carl Weinrich, organ.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7023. 12-in. \$7.50.

An extraordinarily clear and lifelike reproduction of the sound of the organ. Under Weinrich's capable hands and feet the improvisational quality of the great D minor Toccata and the monumental power of the F major Toccata, with the tensions generated by its enormous pedalpoints, are given full value—a value enhanced by the fidelity of the recording. The Fughetta on the chorale is played twice, with a different registration the second time. In the two big works the pedal sometimes lacks definition in rapid phrases, but whether this is a fault of the registration or of the instrument I cannot tell. In any case it is a minor point, as is the reverberation that is occasionally carried over into rests; the latter is indeed only another tribute to the realism of the disk. Here is that still not very common combination—true high fidelity applied to a good performance of great music. N. B.

BACH
Organ Works

Tocatta and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582; Prelude and Fugue in E-flat, BWV 552; Prelude and Fugue in A, BWV 536.

Gaston Litaize, organ.
LONDON DTL 93037. 12-in. \$4.98.

When the organ is going full blast, as in the Toccata and the big E-flat Prelude, the floor trembles, the house shakes, and poor Bach is drowned in the din. Elsewhere Litaize is revealed as a sensitive, intelligent performer. He takes the Passacaglia and Fugue at a tempo deliberate enough to permit him to give full value to the fascinating detail of this majestic masterwork, yet vital enough to allow him to do justice to its grand line. Unlike some organists, he does not indulge in frequent and fussy changes of registration. The lovely work in A major also comes off well. There were clicks on Side 1 of the review disk. N. B.

BACH
Concertos for Violin and Strings: in A minor; in E
†Vivaldi: *Concerto for Two Violins and Strings in A minor, Op. 3, No. 8*

David Oistrakh (in the Vivaldi and Bach E major), Isaac Stern (in the Vivaldi and Bach A minor), violins; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5087. 12-in. \$3.98.

George Jean Nathan once wrote of James M. Barrie that he represented the triumph of sugar over diabetes. When I listened to Oistrakh begin the slow movement of the E major Concerto, it seemed that Nathan's words would be applicable here too; but as the movement progressed, diabetes won out. Stern's treatment of the A minor does not suffer from saccharinity. It is a first-rate job, whose only rival is the superb Heifetz recording. And it would have given that one even stiffer competition if Ormandy had used a continuo instrument to fill the gaps between top and bottom. The Vivaldi is a revision of one of the twelve concertos of *L'Estro harmonico*. The editor changed the orchestral portion considerably and replaced Vivaldi's finale with an entirely different one, of unknown authorship. This edition, made about fifty years ago, was a bold and pioneering venture then, when Vivaldi was only a name in the musical dictionaries. But it won't do today. We want what Vivaldi wrote, not what an editor—no matter how well-intentioned—thought he should have written. N. B.

BACH
Suites: No. 1, in C; No. 2, in B minor

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond.
EPIC LC 3194. 12-in. \$3.98.

A rather large force is employed here but it makes a fine sound. The tempos are good, the phrasing nicely modeled. The only interpretative question arises in connection with some of the ornaments. In No. 2 the flute is a bit distant in solo passages, and in tutti is heard only as a faint edge of liquid color. Van Beinum takes the Badinerie in this suite somewhat more slowly than many of his colleagues, but it retains its playfulness and bounce. N. B.

BACH
Suites: No. 1, in C; No. 3, in D

Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Hans von Benda, cond.
TELEFUNKEN LGX 66040. 12-in. \$4.98.

While this is listed as a chamber orchestra, there is nothing puny about its sound. It is, if anything, a little too "close up." The instrumental balances are very good, particularly with respect to the blending of the excellent trumpets with the rest of the ensemble in No. 3, and the performances as a whole are quite acceptable. The only questionable spot is the Gavotte in No. 3, where Benda takes the main section too broadly and has to speed up the middle portion. To these ears, however, the good qualities of the recording are offset by the sound of the violins, which is coarse and unreal. N. B.

BACH
Two-Part Inventions; Concerto for Harpsichord and Strings, in D minor, BWV 1052

Wanda Landowska, harpsichord; string ensemble, Eugène Bigot, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 1974. 12-in. \$3.98.

The next best thing to playing these marvelous little inventions oneself (no matter how badly) is to listen to them as Landowska plays them here. Each comes out a little gem, performed with eloquence but with no trace of sentimentality. She adds more ornaments than you or I would dare to, but they are always in perfect taste, and who is to say that she is wrong? The Inventions were recorded last year. The concerto recording was made in 1938 and, alas, sounds like it. It only proves what enormous strides the audio engineers have made. But there is so much fire underneath those peaky old sounds that one wishes Landowska would record the concerto again. N. B.

BALAKIREV
Thamar; Russia; Islamey (orch. Casella)

Philharmonia Orchestra, Lovro von Maticic, cond.
ANGEL 35291. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

These three works represent the best and principal output of Mily Balakirev, mentor of a number of other great Russian composers. *Thamar*, the direct ancestor of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, has been recorded a number of times, notably by Beecham (Columbia), Ansermet (London), and Fistoulari (M-G-M). Each has its merits, but the present version—despite some rather slow tempos in certain sections—adds up to the most exciting presentation with the most thrilling sound. Since all four recordings are good, however, the choice will depend on what you want to go with them—Dvorak's *Symphonic Variations* (Beecham), a collection of Liadov pieces (Ansermet), the suite from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Ivan the Terrible* (Fistoulari), or the works by Balakirev himself noted above (*Russia* here makes its first appearance on LP). If you want a representative collection of Balakirev's music, performed with requisite color and dynamism, this is your disk. P. A.

BARBER
Symphony No. 1 — See Hanson: *Symphony No. 5*.

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BARTOK*Cantata profana*

Richard Lewis, tenor, Marko Rothmuller, baritone; New Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Walter Susskind, cond.

Four Slovak Folk Songs; Eight Songs from Twenty-seven Choruses

The Concert Choir, Margaret Hillis, cond.
BARTOK BR 312. 12-in. \$5.95.

The *Cantata profana* is Bartók's most important choral work. Its text, by the composer himself, is based on a Rumanian folk ballad and tells simply of nine young hunters who were changed into nine handsome stags and could never go home again to their parents. Reduced to so bald a synopsis, this sounds like nothing at all; but the poem serves to bring forth some of Bartók's finest barbaric writing, some of his eeriest atmosphere-music, and one of his most beautiful lyric endings. The performance is superb and the recording is quite good. The short folk-song arrangements on the other side are all expertly done, but they are all too bland and innocent to be effective as a group.

A. F.

BARTOK*Concerto for Orchestra*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

RCA VICTOR LM 1934. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is a virtuoso piece, but its virtuoso element can be overdone, as it is here. The interpretation has a nervous, fidgety, hair-trigger quality that does the music no good, and the acid brilliance of the recording fails to honor either Bartók or the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

A. F.

BEETHOVEN*Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58**Rondo for Piano, in C, Op. 51, No. 1*

Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul van Kempen, cond.
DECCA DL 9742. 12-in. \$3.98.

Pursuing the course taken with the *Emperor* Concerto, Decca remasters the Fourth from the tapes used in her complete edition of the Beethoven piano concertos, with a corresponding improvement in the quality of sound. The piano now reproduces in good likeness of itself, and the orchestra is satisfactory notwithstanding some filtering through distance. There is no occasion to alter the opinion of the performance stated at the appearance of the complete edition: the pianist combines music, symmetry, and pianistic into a willowy felicity of natural utterance; and the orchestra, not quite matching this, yet plays with high competence.

A double-barreled editorial mishre committed here is going to cause vexation. Side 1 closes with the dying echo of the andante, into which should intrude (*segue il rondo*) the breezy reassurances of the finale. This we cannot hear without a hiatus for changing sides, without an interruption of the mood intended by Beethoven to be broken by himself. Now the sweet little Rondo in C for piano solo is the guiltless cause of the disaffection we must feel at the untoward interruption, for that (beautifully



Matacic's Thamar: dynamism and color.

played) miniature was appended to the concerto in the hope that it would obviate disdainful reception of a short long-play. It is not only a poor choice for such padding, since Decca has already issued it on another disk which people may be presumed to have bought, but it was inserted at the wrong place. A filler of that length, preceding the concerto, with the frontier between them clearly marked, would have been easily within technical limitations for duration and would have allowed andante and rondo, adjacent on Side 2, to flow without pause.

C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN*Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D (after the Violin Concerto, Op. 61)*

Artur Balsam, piano; Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Clemens Dahinden, cond.
CONCERT HALL 1239. 12-in. \$4.98.

In a review of the only other edition, this notable oddity's features were recited without condescension. It is not a freak, but a new coloration of the Violin Concerto adjusted without awkwardness but obviously with less fluency in the very violinistic first two movements. It is embellished by a striking cadenza to the first movement, five minutes of duet between piano and timpani that give an individual character to the transcription. Mr. Balsam makes no effort to imitate a violin: his crisp nimbleness in music of this period is a pianist's; and he and the conductor accord in a performance of continuous decisive movement rare in the Violin Concerto and inappropriate to the more singing instrument. This and a cleaner bite to the sound gain favor for the disk over the other one (by Helen Schnabel and a Vienna orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler) in a comparison of their respective general aspect; and to clinch this judgment is the Balsam playing of the cadenza, a most imposing applicator of imaginative alterations of force.

The sound is hard to adjust, and after the finest adjustment will not be of high quality except in definition at low volume. The violins are shrill and the piano is never quite right on wide-range apparatus. On lesser instruments reproduction is more satisfactory.

C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN*Sonatas for Piano: No. 8, in C minor ("Pathétique"), Op. 13; No. 14, in C-sharp minor ("Moonlight"), Op. 27, No. 2*

Rudolf Firkušny, piano.
CAPITOL P 8322. 12-in. \$3.98.

Still glows the *Moonlight*, glows and grows.
In leagues of microgrooves
As protocol behooves.
What dog would build a catalogue
Without a *Pathétique*?
What list so bare and bleak?

Dispiriting as it is to contemplate the twenty-oddth of each, it must be admitted that both are justified by high quality of play and sound, the *Moonlight* especially in the separate clarity of bass and treble lines and in the respect given to its little center movement. The carefully shaped adagio of No. 8, with greater than usual prominence in the secondary themes, is worth a laud. Living piano-sound.

C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN*Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 5, in F ("Spring"), Op. 24; No. 9, in A ("Kreutzer"), Op. 47*

Mischa Elman, violin; Joseph Seiger, piano.
LONDON LL 1258. 12-in. \$3.98.

It would be sadism to deride this astonishing pair of performances. The violinist strings together some thousands of lovely noises in a quite personal and unfamiliar way, although there are reminiscences of Beethoven in many measures and in the adagio of the *Spring* Sonata we hear Beethoven absolute. Excellent reproduction.

C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN*Symphonies: Nos. 1-9*

Vienna Staatsoper Orchestra (in Nos. 1, 3, 6, 7, 9), with Magda Laszlo (s), Hilde Rössl-Majdan (c), Petre Munteanu (t), Richard Standen (bs), and Chorus of the Vienna Singakademie (in No. 9), and Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London (in Nos. 2, 4, 5, 8), Hermann Scherchen, cond.
WESTMINSTER 7701. Seven 12-in. \$39.50.

Without exception these performances have been reviewed here at the time of their separate original appearances. Now presented in numerical sequence (but not in automatic couplings) in a handsome, well-built album with forty pages of notes taken from Tovey's *Essays in Musical Analysis*, they confirm in concentration all the impressions of Dr. Scherchen's work made by the individual editions.

A reprocess has been effected on some of the records so that all now respond to the RIAA curve, not that this is to mean that they all sound alike or that all will give their best reproduction from the same adjustment of controls. No marked deviations from the sound of the first editions are to be heard, for which thanks may be offered, the original reproduction being of a quality not in need of tampering. Indeed the orchestral representation on all these fourteen sides, made at different times and places with different orchestras, has an extraordinary merit of combined robustness and clarity. Even the four sides of unusually long duration, even the Seventh Symphony recorded five years

ago, emit an instrumental discrimination still elusive to most records.

There is not room here to repeat the details of interpretation already printed. Certain of the symphonies in these performances — Nos. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 especially, and 9 — are an absolute requisite for study by any fervent of Beethoven, and perhaps the others are too, in each of which a movement is given an individuality of tempo in opposition to most tastes. Fortunately the individuality is that of a conductor who seeks not an *éclair* but a truth. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 3, in E-flat ("Eroica"), Op. 55

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.

CAPITOL P 8334. 12-in. \$3.98.

One greets another *Eroica* at this date with a rather sad wave, especially when it is as good as this one. Of the twenty-six issued on LP, four or five will be paramount until the next new apocalyptic revolution in the reproduction of sound. There is no apocalypse left for the conductors and orchestras. It is nevertheless fair that Mr. Steinberg, a musician of obstinately wholesome preferences and force, and Capitol's big American exponent of big music, be allowed to present his sturdy concept.

Sterling too; firm and self-possessed in the first movement, leaning more to Cromwell than to Bonaparte, never breathless (as this opinion would like it to be) but determined and formidable. Thereafter we are less conscious of restraint in three movements not notably different in shape and

force from other good projections. In a pure reproduction of less than average volume the contrapuntal distinctness is vividly apparent, and the vague discomfiture felt here is explained after analysis by the failure of true grandeur to burst out of the grooves. It seldom does in this orchestration hostile to the requirements of records.

A particularity of this *Eroica* is the generous phrasing of the heart-stopping points of tender relief with which the intrepid nobility is punctuated. Surely Beethoven and Pittsburgh are at one there. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67
†Haydn: *Symphony No. 45, in F-sharp minor ("Farewell")*

Camerata Academica of the Mozarteum

A Beautiful Beethoven Ninth by Angel out of Vienna

NEARLY SIMULTANEOUSLY in the fall of 1952 three masterful versions of the Ninth Symphony were hustled into the light to dispute for public favor. That was a herculean and by its nature an inconclusive melee which heaped honor and disparagement on all three contestants, Kleiber, Scherchen, and Toscanini, in accordance with the biases of the onlookers. A corollary result, the intimidation of other entrepreneurs, was easier to perceive than victory for any champion. For three-and-a-half years — a whole epoch on the LP calendar — only two versions, sonically lame, were allowed to steal upon the glorious, well-occupied field; and one of these, with a lofty performance led by the same Herbert von Karajan now in reappearance under other auspices, was baited by Columbia with a low price that is still a strong attraction. Perhaps the heroic vitality of the veteran Hermann Abendroth was supposed to cover the sonic oddities of the other interim production. Possibly it was issued merely because it was available.

At any rate, there is nothing casual about the newest edition. It was inevitable; Beethoven's last two symphonies have been expected in Karajan interpretations since January, when the appearance of the Second completed Angel's recording of the first seven by her most active and most imposing conductor. It has been reasonably expected that the Eighth and Ninth would be very good, or at least very impressive, given the quality of their predecessors and of the rival versions, and the sharp audio-musical sensibilities of the Messrs. Angel. One hearing shows that the expectations were not too sanguine, and several hearings confirm a feeling of respect at a phonographic accomplishment of significant probity and resourcefulness.

The Philharmonia Orchestra traveled to Vienna, there to unite with the chorus already trained, for the recording of the Ninth Symphony. The Eighth was made in London, and one will note the softer glow of the Vienna acoustics. Both registrations are excellent in clarity and force, particularly the woodwinds' clarity in the Ninth, but the blazing *fff*'s in the earlier work smite more percussively than equally powerful but more resilient *fortes* in the Ninth. Both sym-

phonies make an impression above all of vehemence, of dogmatic energy; forceful emphasis, both of shape and weight, is certainly not spared, but much of the vehemence makes its effect less by inherent intensity than by contrast with the extreme lightness of the whispered *ppp*'s. There is always a reserve of energy for the finales, which nowhere else are so completely and overwhelmingly vociferated. The downy quality of the violins, piano, in the Ninth, will not be taken for granted by collectors accustomed to the orthodox stridence of most records.

The two tiny sequences on which most of the first two movements of the Ninth is built are delivered with a firm decision of accent, and it is accent, more than tempo, which gives character to these movements. It is not too strong to say that the difference between a soft and an imperious accent in the first movement is the difference between peace and war. But conflict is the condition to be established, and only in the Toscanini playing is it established as it is here. In the second movement the dominating harshness of the humor is relieved by a particular liteness in the second subject. The long-held cantabile of the third movement is played to melt the viscera but shares honors with several other versions in this.

The choral projection is hugely dynamic and excellent in reproduction, exception



Ninth's notables: Höffgen, Karajan, Schwarzkopf, Edelmann, and Häfliger.

made for an overgreat effect of distance in some of the quieter passages. In sonic terms it is the most capable *Ode to Joy*, although its excitement has not the breathless quality of the Toscanini record.

Four editions of the Ninth Symphony — the three of 1952 and the newest one — are sonically acceptable in terms of 1956. Several others, the Weingartner and Walter in particular, offer beautiful interpretations, but the sound of the former is very old and familiarity with better things is inexorably blunting to the effect of the latter. Of the four, the impetuous Toscanini and gravely intellectualized Scherchen sets are remarkably personal essays quite apart from any of the other versions and from what is current in concert halls. Both excite extravagant responses of eulogy or vituperation, and it is more than ordinarily unwise to coast with a reviewer's leaning and commit oneself to either without a precautionary hearing. Not to pussyfoot about it, this reviewer's preference among them all averages into the Toscanini. The other first-rate recording is of a sage and authoritative communication from the lamented Erich Kleiber. The Karajan records are more compulsive.

The Eighth Symphony on the fourth side is rare and rarefied sport. In this projection, extremes are hustled about with extraordinary address: no equivocation in the boisterousness of the first movement or the insistent mock-anger of the vivacious ukase in the finale, with its elongated tail of laughing pomposity, nor in the filtered finesse of the perfect little allegretto; everything entirely obvious but played with the kind of gusto disdainful of protocol that Beethoven must have hoped for in his "kline" and "unbuttoned" symphony. The enormous dynamic scope displayed by the engineers naturally represents an equivalent played by the musicians, and yet the final chord of the Philharmonia men is intact like the first.

C. G. BURKE

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies: No. 8, in F, Op. 93; No. 9, in D minor ("Choral"), Op. 125*

Philharmonia Orchestra; Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), Marga Höffgen (c), Ernst Häfliger (t), Otto Edelmann (bs); Chorus of the Society of the Friends of Music (Vienna); Herbert von Karajan, cond.

ANGEL 3544. Two 12-in. \$9.98.

(Salzburg), Bernhard Paumgartner, cond. (in the Beethoven); American Artists' Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. (in the Haydn).

GRAND AWARD 33-319. 12-in. \$5.95.

When a conductor who is primarily a scholar turns an erudite eye to the core of the repertory, we must expect revelation, whether we wish it or not. Dr. Paumgartner's revelation is of a quick-trotting finale, not unjustified by the score, but productive of a thin, transient excitement in place of a triumph of majestic strength—more the victory of State U. over the Aggies than of man over himself. This nullifies the effect of a compelling andante and a fine grim scherzo. Circling, not unimpressive sonics, but distant violins and a reverberation that rolls out the bass to smother much of the detail.

The *Farewell* too is given a fast finale here—in this case the adagio fifth movement taken at a surprising clip and bereaved of the gentle melancholy of its sweet complaint. Perhaps this was done to provide space for the talk by Mr. Deems Taylor that precedes the performance. Adequate sound verging on acerbity. C. G. B.

BERLIOZ
Overtures

Le Carnaval romain, Overture, Op. 9; *Le Roi Lear*, Overture, Op. 4; *Le Corsaire*, Overture, Op. 21; *Les Francs-Juges*, Overture Op. 3; *Waverley*, Overture, Op. 1

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5064. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is a first recording for the *Waverley* Overture which turns out to be quite good for an Opus 1, even with its Rossinian overtones. As for the interpretations, they are a perfect combination of clarity, drama, and style—brilliant performances that should please everybody. Sir Thomas is definitely in his element here. P. A.

BERNSTEIN

Vacillate — See Gould: *Fall River Legend*.

BRAHMS

Hungarian Dances, Nos. 4, 3, 2, 11, 1, 12, 13, and 17

†Schubert: *Fantasy in F minor*, Op. 103

Helen and Karl Ulrich Schnabel, pianos.
EPIC LC 3183. 12-in. \$3.98.

Brahms wrote his twenty-one *Hungarian Dances* for piano four-hands, yet this marks their first appearance in this form on disks. It is too bad, therefore, that the Schnabels didn't elect to perform all twenty-one, instead of limiting themselves to eight. It is a pity, too, that they didn't lavish a little more care on them and provide us with cleaner, more precise, and more convincing interpretations. They are at their best in the slower sections, where both ensemble and tone are more pleasing; in the more rapid sections they tend to become heavy-handed.

The same criticism applies to the lovely, introspective Schubert Fantasy, one of the more rewarding of the composer's works for piano duet. Recording throughout is ade-



Brahms glows for Schmidt-Isserstedt.

quate, with some noisy surfaces on my copy. P. A.

BRAHMS

Sonatas for Cello and Piano: No. 1, in E minor, Op. 38; *No. 2, in F*, Op. 99

Pierre Fournier, cello; Wilhelm Backhaus, piano.

LONDON LL 1264. 12-in. \$3.98.

Fournier and Backhaus add to an embarrassment of riches, for the catalogue already contains some superb recordings of these two beautiful sonatas. Elegance and noble refinement are the hallmarks of this newest collaboration. However, I would have liked a fuller, more rounded tone from Fournier, part of which might have been accomplished had the engineers placed the microphone a bit nearer to the cellist. As microphoned here, Backhaus' piano sometimes overbalances the lighter-toned stringed instrument.

To my mind, the preferable recording of these sonatas is still that of Starker and Bogin (Period). However, the Fournier-Backhaus and the De Machula-Mikkila are also accomplished interpretations. All three are worth hearing and comparing. P. A.

BRAHMS

Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 73

NWDR Symphony Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond.

CAPITOL P 18000. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Second Symphony of Brahms has received from Dr. Schmidt-Isserstedt a performance of pure but glowing classicism, expressive in no discernible way of the conductor's "personality." It illuminates the Symphony without an extraneous glare, in a warm triumph of the best kind of Kapellmeister. Poise and proportion, equable fluidity and natural shading distinguish a leadership in which nothing is erratic. The orchestra is excellent in unfruffled reproduction, particularly to be commended for the timbres of the woodwinds and the nice bite, acid-free, of the strings. There is nothing quite like it among the recorded versions already in existence, of which the best express the strong individualities of their conductors and are outstanding in

different ways. Careful collectors will compare this with the Toscanini and Boulton editions. C. G. B.

BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 8, in C minor

Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna), Jascha Horenstein, cond.

VOX PL 9682. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

Symphony No. 8, in C minor

†Schubert: *Symphony No. 3, in D*

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond.

EPIC SC 6011. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

A lot of Brucknerite blood is likely to be spilled over these two excellent new recordings of the Eighth Symphony. As anyone familiar with the Bruckner symphonies knows, most of these works exist in several different versions. During his lifetime, the composer succumbed to criticism of his scoring and to complaints about the excessive length of his works—with the result that both he and others after him made numerous alterations and cuts in the scores, many of which have been condemned in recent years. An authoritative complete edition of the symphonies was attempted, with the original scores as the basis for departure. Robert Haas published such an edition of the Eighth in 1935. Still the Brucknerites—at least some of them—were not satisfied, and in 1955 a second "original edition," based this time on the revisions of 1890, was published by Leopold Nowak. The complete story is told by Dr. Joseph Braunstein, of the New York Public Library, in his scholarly notes for the Vox set. Van Beinum uses what is presumably the Haas edition, while Horenstein employs the one by Nowak. To the average listener—including this one—there will be little apparent difference, though close examination of the two scores may reveal certain discrepancies.

The big differences here are in matters of tempo and price. Horenstein adopts a more leisurely pace throughout, especially in the Scherzo, and his version runs to four sides. Van Beinum, on the other hand, fits his interpretation neatly onto three sides, allowing us to enjoy a beautifully proportioned reading of the delightful, and undeservedly neglected Schubert Third Symphony on the fourth side. By paying two dollars less for the Epic set you get an extra symphony. The reproduction in both sets is exceptionally fine, as is the orchestral playing, but Vox's sound is a trifle brighter and more sharply focused (especially in the brasses) and has greater over-all hall resonance.

Fervent Brucknerites will undoubtedly want to compare the two sets; others will probably be happier with the less expensive Van Beinum version. P. A.

BUXTEHUDE

Organ Works, Vol. 1

Alf Linder, organ.

WESTMINSTER 18117. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Dietrich Buxtehude is usually classified in the history books as a "forerunner" of Bach. It is certainly true that Bach learned much from him, but it is time that Buxtehude be considered on his own merits and not be



Gaetano Donizetti

judged only by his effect on the younger master. That those merits were very considerable is shown by the contents of the present disk: two chaconnes, a passacaglia, and three chorale fantasias. They reveal their composer as a man with trenchant ideas and great skill and resourcefulness in working them out. The passacaglia and chaconnes are not tremendous works, like Bach's compositions in that form, but they are fine pieces in their more modest frames. The fantasia on *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* conveys with serenity the elation of that sturdy old chorale. That on *Ich dank dir schon* is perhaps less interesting, but the elaborations on *Ich ruf zu dir* are masterly.

Linder, playing on the same instrument — in Skänninge, Sweden — that Westminster is using for the complete organ works of Bach, favors the softer stops, which make a lovely sound. Once or twice, one has the impression that he is changing registration unnecessarily or too soon, but in general his playing is tasteful. The recording is wide-range and clear. Westminster plans to complete the organ works of Buxtehude in ten more volumes. N. B.

CHABRIER *Dix pièces pittoresques*

Ginette Doyen, piano.
WESTMINSTER 18141. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Four of these works were orchestrated by Chabrier to form his *Suite Pastorale*, and in this form they are moderately well known. But in their original form, together with the other six pieces, they are seldom heard. This is unjustifiable neglect of some of the freshest, original piano music to come out of nineteenth-century France. When not trying to imitate Wagner, as he did rather ludicrously in his opera *Guendoline*, the largely self-taught Chabrier could write in a unique style that sounds more like his successors than his contemporaries. Miss Doyen, who called attention to some other Chabrier pieces in a previous disk, plays this suite with comparable spirit, style, and lovely tone. Recommended. R. E.

CHOPIN *Nocturnes*

No. 2, in E-flat, Op. 9, No. 2; No. 5, in F-sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; No. 10, in A-flat, Op. 32, No. 2; No. 12, in G, Op. 37, No. 2; No. 13,

in C minor, Op. 48, No. 1; No. 20, in C-sharp minor, Op. Posth.

Nadia Reisenberg, piano.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7029. 12-in. \$7.50.

Miss Reisenberg's playing is so good that it is a pity she did not record all the nocturnes. The pianist seldom adds any personal element to her interpretations, any extra poetic intuitions, but she makes all the points that are in the score, or that are implied there, having at her disposal a singing tone and complete technical command. More should not be expected of any artist. When Miss Reisenberg does more than is implied, the result is an improvement, as when she treats the A-flat Nocturne with exceptional delicacy, lifting the work out of its inherent sentimentality. These six nocturnes are representative rather than the best.

The recording is incredibly natural. No other piano disk I know of, even from Westminster, has managed to eradicate so completely the listener's awareness of the recording mechanism or the engineering process. Highly recommended. R. E.

CLEMENTI

Sonata for Piano, in B minor, Op. 40, No. 2
— See Hummel: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 85.*

COUPERIN *Keyboard Music*

Les Vieux Seigneurs; Les Jeunes Seigneurs; La Superbe; Courante; Musète de Taverni; Les Rozeaux; Les Dars homicides; Le Tic-toc-choc; L'Amphibie; Le Rossignol-en-amour.

†Ravel: *Le Tombeau de Couperin*

Robert Wallenborn, piano.
TELEFUNKEN LGX 66041. 12-in. \$4.98.

Robert Wallenborn, an American-born and trained pianist now living in Europe, is a musician of unusual intelligence and technical facility. These attributes combine to produce a rather cool, glib interpretative style, the stress being on form rather than on color. With the exception of the Ravel Toccata — unaccountably played too fast and messily — the performances are unfailingly urbane, delicately dry, and witty. A good illustration is the amusing and original quality of mockery he brings to the middle section of the Rigaudon. The choice of Couperin works is discriminating, and only the *Tic-toc-choc* has had much currency. Mr. Wallenborn's fastidious tone is satisfactorily reproduced. R. E.

DEBUSSY

Petite Suite (orch. Büsser)
Children's Corner (orch. Caplet)

Concert Arts Orchestra, Felix Slatkin, cond.
CAPITOL P 8328. 12-in. \$3.98.

Anyone looking for a good "demonstration disk" at a nonpremium price need look no further than this meticulously engineered recording of the *Petite Suite*. The instrumental timbres are just, the balance between woodwind and strings has been sensitively regulated, and the general effect is of natural (not artificial) vibrancy. Hurrah for hi-fi. Fortunately, the performance is worthy of the care expended on its registration; Slatkin's Hollywood ensemble plays with refined virtuosity and conveys just the right

feeling of vernal freshness. The *Children's Corner*, however, suffers in comparison with the more freely nuanced interpretation of André Cluytens and the Orchestre National (Angel).

Incidentally, Henri Büsser's marvelously wrought orchestration of the *Petite Suite* has always whetted my interest in this composer's own works, of which there are aplenty — but not on LP. R. G.

DEBUSSY

Quartet in G minor

Curtis String Quartet.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7045. 12-in. \$7.50.

The sound is superb, like having a string quartet playing in your home. But if you want to hear the Debussy Quartet performed with optimum style and imagination, you would do well to invite another ensemble. R. G.

DITTERSDORF

Symphony in C — See J. C. Bach: *Sinfonia in B-flat, Op. 18, No. 2.*

DONIZETTI

La Favorita

Giulietta Simionato (ms), Leonora; Gianni Poggi (t), Fernando; Ettore Bastianini (b), Alfonso XI; Jerome Hines (bs), Baldassare; Bice Magnani (s), Ines; Piero di Palma (t), Don Gasparo. Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Florence), Alberto Erede, cond.
LONDON XLLA 39. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

In March, Angel released a twelve-inch disk of excerpts from Donizetti's *La Favorita*. And now London has issued a complete recording of the opera — the first in the history of the phonograph. (The long and banal ballet music, however, has been omitted.) Henry Chorley, a famous British critic of the Victorian era, wrote of *La Favorita*: "Essentially a second-rate composer. Donizetti struck out some first-rate things in a happy hour — such as the last act of *La Favorita* . . . There is musical and dramatic beauty enough to make a story painful to the verge of vileness, forgiven. . . . The anathema scene in the second act is forcible . . . There is a voluptuous tone in the heroine's grand air . . . So passionate is the romance for the tenor that it is hardly possible to sing it without effect. As given by such singers as M. Duprez and Signor Mario, it is to be ranked among the most thrilling songs of the Italian stage. . . . In *La Favorita* he [Donizetti] proved himself worthy of admission to the stage which a Rossini and a Meyerbeer had studied with solicitude." These remarks, written in 1860, for the most part hold true today, though one would perhaps hesitate to be shocked by the "vileness" of the triangle involving Alfonso XI of Castile, Leonora di Guzman, and her cavalier, Fernando. Such a serup must seem mild indeed to a generation brought up on the present-day excesses of press, radio, and motion pictures.

La Favorita's *bel canto* arias, suave duets, and impressive ensembles deserve recognition. All of the score may not be grade-A Donizetti, but the finest portions, especially the universally admired final act, are well worth study and careful examination for

lovers of mid-nineteenth-century Italian opera.

London has now made this possible with a performance that, if open to specific reservations, is nevertheless impressively idiomatic and excellently recorded. Alberto Erede is not the most dynamic of conductors, but his care and sense of style are obviously lavished on this set, and he has a provocative cast at his disposal. Giulietta Simionato and Gianni Poggi, the Leonora and Fernando, were chosen to sing these roles at the important September 1948 centenary celebrations in Bergamo, Donizetti's native city. Miss Simionato's pungent, vibrant mezzo-soprano proves ideal for the music of Leonora, which demands just such a voice. "O mio Fernando" is wonderfully effective, and twice she ascends to a high C with thrilling effect. Mr. Poggi has a basically excellent voice — clear, well-resonated, capable of carrying in a large theater; but he lacks distinction and imagination for the role of Fernando (an ideal part for Jussi Bjöerling), and his singing of "Spirto gentil" is wanting in the fine-spun finesse that can make it a lovely moment. He does, however, command range, power, and a sense of the conventions.

Ettore Bastianini is every inch the King of Castile, singing with breadth and dignity. He might have made the irony of "A tanto amor" more biting, but his is a performance worthy of respect. The voice is among the best of our day. Jerome Hines, making his London Records debut as Baldassare, should have been far more forceful in the scene in which the prelate thunders out the Papal curse. His best singing, by far, occurs in the final act, especially in the serene "Splendon più belle in ciel le stelle."

The singing of the London cast is naturally more mature and assured than that of the young singers heard in the Angel record of excerpts. However, Angel's Dino Formichini sings a far more artistic "Spirto gentil" than Poggi. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

DOWLAND

Lachrimae

Geneva Chamber Ensemble, Franz Walter, cond.
EMS 12. 12-in. \$5.95.

John Dowland's "Lachrimae or Seven teares figured in seven passionate pavans, with divers other pavans, galiards, and almands, set forth for the lute, viols, or violons, in five parts" were published at London in 1604, when their composer was court lutanist to the king of Denmark. The present recording offers four of the "passionate pavans" arranged with other pieces from the set so as to form two suites, each beginning and ending with a "teare." The performers comprise two violinists, a violist, two cellists, and a lutanist, and Peter Warlock's edition is used. While the *Lachrimae* proper are saturated with the melancholy characteristic of this composer, they are not entirely dolorous, for, as he wrote in his dedication, "Pleasant are the tears which music weeps, neither are tears shed always in sorrow, but sometime in joy and gladness." In any case, they are cleverly set apart by lively little dances, some of which are quite cheerful and hearty. This is lovely music, and, except for one or two imprecise attacks on Side 1, it is smoothly played and well-recorded. N. B.

DVORAK

Slavonic Dances, Opp. 46 and 72 †Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik, cond.
LONDON LL 1283/4. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

The outstanding LP interpretation of these dances has been that by Vaclav Talich and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (Urania). From the standpoint of stylistic elegance, this performance is not likely to be replaced. But Talich's compatriot Kubelik also is an adept interpreter of this infectious music, and he has the benefit of slightly superior reproduction. At first glance, the London set might seem the better bargain, since Kubelik gets the dances on three sides and devotes the fourth to Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*; but his is not a particularly distinguished or forceful reading of the latter work, so that it need not enter into the consideration. Either set of the dances will do very nicely. My choice is still Talich. P. A.

DVORAK

Symphony No. 3, in F, Op. 76

Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond.
MUSICAL MASTERPIECE SOCIETY 121. 10-in. \$1.89.

Dvorak's Third Symphony, a neglected work endowed with youthful freshness, charming melodies, and — in the Finale — even a faint breath of Bruckner, dates from 1875 and originally bore the opus number 24. It was drastically revised in 1887, when it acquired its present deceptively high opus number. Goehr gives the work a vivacious and persuasive reading, but since this is a reissue of an earlier Concert Hall limited edition, the tonal range is somewhat restricted. Not so much, though, to spoil the delights of the music. P. A.



Demus: Austrian honor to French music.

FAURE

Piano Music

Five Impromptus, Opp. 25, 31, 34, 91, and 102; Theme and Variations, Op. 73; Barcarolle, Op. 70; Nocturne, Op. 63, No. 6

Joerg Demus, piano.

WESTMINSTER 18118. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

The pieces in this collection are all late romantic in style and minor masterpieces of their type, particularly the powerful Theme and Variations. Despite his Austrian background and his predilection for Bach, Schubert, and Schumann, Demus not only does full justice to this French music, he does it honor. His approach is warm, sensitive, often forceful yet never forced, and Westminster has allowed the tone of his piano to sound glitteringly natural. P. A.

FAURE

Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1, in A, Op. 13; No. 2, in E minor, Op. 108

Zino Francescatti, violin; Robert Casadesu, piano.
COLUMBIA ML 5049. 12-in. \$3.98.

Though these two sonatas were composed more than forty years apart — the Second after Fauré had become deaf — they are both full of ardor and melodic beauty. The Second Sonata, however, does take a little while to grow on the listener, whereas the First has an immediate appeal. Francescatti and Casadesu make an ideally matched sonata team, in almost any music, and their French background equips them to interpret the Fauré idiom with great sensitivity. There is the most desirable interpretation of these two sonatas currently on disks. P. A.

FLOTOW

Martha

Elena Rizzieri (s), Lady Harriet; Pia Tassinari (ms), Nancy; Ferruccio Tagliavini (t), Lionel; Carlo Tagliabue (b), Plunkett; Bruno Carmassi (bs), Sir Tristan; Mario Zornotti (bs), Sheriff. Chorus and Orchestra of Radio-televisione Italiana (Turin), Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, cond.
CETRA B 1254. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

Notwithstanding the notes that come with the new Cetra set, Flotow's *Martha* can hardly now be called a work " . . . certain to remain fixed in the standard operatic repertoire because its rollicking melodies offer great singers frequent opportunities to shine without having to worry too much about characterization or any subtle musical demands in the score itself." Potting at record notes is, in general, a pretty inutile form of literary target-practice; but this sentence is so fresh from Looking Glass Land that it is irresistible. Besides, it has, at least by inversion, a certain relevance. In brief, *Martha* isn't and doesn't. It isn't in the standard repertoire of here and now, let alone certain of remaining fixed in it. It doesn't offer the opportunities described.

Since 1929, *Martha* has not seen the light of the Metropolitan stage; and although it lasted well into the 1930s in Chicago, it has for the past twenty years been hearable in this country almost exclusively in decreasingly frequent second-line performances using the rather unnerving Schirmer English version. The shine of great singers is precisely something it has not had. Nor does it in the new set, though the phrase " . . . without having to worry . . ." is quite evocative of the *laissez-faire* quality of the performance, which is fast, casual about proper notes in proper places, and blithely

opportunistic in matters of choice between what is right and what is easy or superficially effective. This is a pity. *Martha* is not a work of massive consequence, viewed from any angle, but it is one of the best-tempered, sweetest-natured, most engagingly tuneful of operas.

Its history is nothing if not international. Flotus was German by birth and background, but his musical roots were in the Paris of the 1830s-1840s. The point is commonly and justly made that even though *Martha* was composed for Vienna it is closer to, say, Auber than it is to *Singspiel*—that it is really a kind of French *opéra bouffe* composed to an originally French-derived German libretto. However, Parisian taste in comic opera was strongly Italian-influenced too, and *Martha* had no difficulty in becoming established wherever there were opera houses. As a result of this early and widespread dissemination, *Martha* has a multiple personality so far as performing traditions are concerned; a German *Martha* is one thing, an Italian *Martha* another, a *Martha* à la Schirmer another yet, and there is no basis for doctrinaire assignment of virtue to one and damnation to the others. The Cetra version should not pose too many problems for most listeners whose ideas about the work have been formed domestically. The cuts are numerous and a few quite extensive, some unfamiliar, but on the whole they are fewer and less down-to-the-bone than those made in, say, performances by the old touring San Carlo company. Listeners free of preconceptions, though, might well consider the older, less carefully recorded Urania set, in German; it can still be found. The performance is better integrated musically and better sung on the whole, with Erna Berger in superb fettle as Lady Harriet. And the German text casts a *Lied*-like, almost Schubertian glow over melodies that seem merely sweet and full of sentimentality when sung to Italian or English words.

Of the individual performances in the Cetra set, by far the most accomplished and artistic is that of Pia Tassinari as Nancy. She is adept, highly musical, and richly humorous without ever shading over into cheap comic effectiveness; it cannot really be blamed on her that she ends by seeming more aristocratic as a lady's maid than does Elena Rizzieri, who sings fleetly and often prettily but without much vocal character, as Lady Harriet. Ferruccio Tagliavini, not in top vocal condition, gives much attention to sounding like himself, very little to anything else. The result is a pompous, unsympathetic characterization and a slovenly musical performance, frequently no more than proximate as to note values and marred further by considerable goldbricking in ensembles. Carlo Tagliabue is steady, but not facile or imaginative enough to make up for the fact that the quartets, of which there are a gracious plenty in *Martha*, balance out rather better if the Plunkett is a bass rather than an essentially Verdi-type baritone of mature years. The Sir Tristan is Bruno Carmassi, whose name (to the best of recollection) has not turned up on records since the old Victor *Il Trovatore*, with Aureliano Pertile as Manrico, which Camden has just reissued on LP. He sounds fine, too—and not just by the courtesy that might be extended for old times' sake. The minor roles are done well enough. As for Francesco

Molinari-Pradelli, he seems mainly in a hurry to get through; and although he is too competent a conductor to let things go to pot completely, his tempos are often too fast for the music to expand and sing. The sound is bright and clean. J. H., Jr.

FRANCK *Quartet in D*

Parrenin Quartet.
WESTMINSTER 18136. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

In a great many instances, César Franck composed one-of-a-kind music—one symphony, one violin sonata, one piano quintet, and this lone string quartet, which contains some of Franck's most beautiful music and constitutes one of his finest examples of cyclical form. The Parrenin Quartet, a young Parisian ensemble, gives a polished, sensitive, and sensible account of this noble composition. A superior and welcome recording. P. A.

GERSHWIN *Porgy and Bess (concert version)*

Broc Peters (b), Porgy; Margaret Tynes (s), Bess; Miriam Burton (s), Serena; Joseph Crawford (t), Sportin' Life; William Dillard (b), Crown; Theresa Merritte (s), Clara and Strawberry Woman; Charles Colman (b), Jake. Opera Society Chorus and Orchestra, Paul Belanger, cond.
CONCERT HALL CHS 1247. 12-in. \$4.98.

This is an admirable solution of a vexing problem for those listeners who shy away from complete recordings of operas as being too time-consuming, yet who find the excerpts issued by most companies exasperatingly meager. Here on one twelve-inch disk can be found practically every major vocal portion of the work, even to the street cries. An extremely able cast, in which the robust voice of Broc Peters as Porgy is outstanding, gives a most agreeable performance. The work is well paced and firmly directed by Paul Belanger, and Concert Hall's sound is always satisfactory, if a trifle enclosed. How effective this "concert version" would be in actual performance, I cannot say. On records it does lack one ingredient necessary for a completely successful realization of this folk opera: atmosphere. That an imaginative record producer can inject this quality into a recording has been proved by Goddard Lieberman's excellent Columbia version. This is my only reservation about an otherwise excellent record. J. F. I.

GLAZUNOV *Five Novelettes, Op. 15—See Smetana: Quartet No. 1.*

GLINKA *Russian and Ludmilla*

Vladimir Gavrushev (b), Svezozar; Vera Firsova (s), Ludmilla; Ivan Petrov (b), Russlan; Eugenia Verbitskaya (c), Ratmir; Alexei Krivchenia (bs), Farlaf; Nina Pokrovskaya (s), Gorislava; Georgi Nelepp (t), Finn; Elena Korneyeva (ms), Naina; Sergei Lemeshev (t), Bayan. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Kiril Kondrashin, cond.
WESTMINSTER OPW 1401. Four 12-in. \$19.90.

Glinka's *A Life for the Czar* (1836) and *Russian and Ludmilla* (1842) are universally said to be the first recognizably Russian operas. Certainly, they created a family type that has persisted in most of their successors. Their librettos by Pushkin are fragmentary; their scores are crazy-quilts of genius and banality; outside Russia (like all of their progeny but *Boris Godunov*) they are more discussed than performed. Conventional in almost everything, *Russian* surprisingly boasts a young hero who is a baritone; a prince who is a contralto; a bardic minstrel and an old magician who are both tenors; and a heroine, daughter of the Grand Duke of Kiev, who is a coloratura straight out of Donizetti.

This first complete recording has special values for students. How many listeners will share my surprise on finding that the rapid opening section of the familiar Overture is the much-discussed "Slava!" chorus that ends the opera, or that the more romantic second section of the Overture is a lovelorn lament by Russlan, or that the renowned "Russian" touches are all but swamped in apings of Weber, Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti?

Westminster has provided superior surfaces and a complete libretto in Russian, in transliteration, and in English. The transliteration, unfortunately, is based upon a system rather than upon what the singers pronounce, and the translation is comfy rather than accurate (when, for example, the Russian says "going to Kiev," the translation reads "going home").

Swift, metallic, accurate, and cold, Vera Firsova is the best of the uninspiring singers. Kiril Kondrashin conducts with limp hands, evoking uniformly inexact ensemble. Above the generally dreary level of uneven music raggedly performed rise, not the ballet music (which is of the Minkus-Pugni school), but only the ever-fresh Overture, Russlan's impressive Act II aria, Ludmilla's aria with string obbligato in Act III, the march and *lezginka* in Act IV, and the concluding chorus. The recording, technically almost up to current Western standards, unmercifully exposes both the spottiness of Glinka's taste and talent and the inferior singing, orchestral attack, and choral discipline.

HERBERT WEINSTOCK

GOULD *Fall River Legend* †Bernstein: *Facsimile*

Ballet Theater Orchestra, Joseph Levine, cond.
CAPITOL P 8320. 12-in. \$4.98.

Morton Gould is a gifted composer of light music, but he was 'way beyond his depth in tackling the score for Agnes de Mille's ballet about the Lizzie Borden case. It is one of the real tragedies of the arts in America that that great piece of choreography was not given its musical investiture by someone really capable of coping with its dramatic, atmospheric, and spiritual implications. Bernstein's *Facsimile* comes under Levine's baton as an agreeable, workmanlike affair, but not one to supplant the same composer's *Fancy Free* as his best balletic achievement to date. The inadequacies of the Ballet Theater orchestra are less cruelly exposed here than in its previous recordings. A. F.

GRANADOS

Goyescas, Part 2
 †Mompou: *Impresiones intimas*

Alicia de Larrocha, piano.
 DECCA DL 9815. 12-in. \$3.98.

This disk completes Miss de Larrocha's recording of *Goyescas*. Although it takes three sides and costs more than any other, it also is much the best. Her playing has virtually everything, including a beautiful tone and flawless technique; but it is her volatility and temperament that distinguish her artistry. She envelops *El Amor y La Muerte* in an atmosphere of mystery, in spite of its violent variations of mood. One sample of her imaginative reading comes at the end of this section, as she lets the sounds of clashing chords rise and mingle in subtle disharmony.

Miss de Larrocha plays Mompou's sad, plaintive miniatures with equal felicity, matching the composer's gentle, caressing performances on his own recording of three of the six pieces in the suite. The recorded tone is not the best, thinning out in loud passages. R. E.

GRIEG

Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 and 2
 †Ippolitov-Ivaov: *Caucasian Sketches*

Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra.
 Felix Slatkin, cond.
 CAPITOL P 8329. 12-in. \$3.98.

On paper, this looked like just another disk of war horses; on the phonograph, it was something quite different. Perhaps with the consciousness that he had some overworked material on his hands, Felix Slatkin took pains to lavish the utmost polish and reverence on this music, phrasing it as carefully as he would a Brahms or Mozart symphony. Since he has a top body of instrumentalists at his disposal, and since Capitol has provided the very last word in superbly natural sound (with especially resonant, but not clashing, percussion), this record can be highly recommended even to those tired of hearing the music. P. A.

GRIEG
Songs

Mit einer Primulaveris; Ich liebe dich; Was ich sah; Solveigs Wiegenlied; Jägerlied; Glückshote mein; Letzter Frühling; Zur Rosenzeit; Herbsturm; Erstes Begegnen; Auf der Reise zur Heimat; Dereinst, Gedanke mein; Verborgene Liebe; Herbstimmung; Zickeltanz; Der Prinzessin; Margaretens Wiegenlied; Geschichten; Lichte Nacht; Beim Sonnenuntergang; Ein Schwan.

Hilde Rössl-Majdan, mezzo-soprano; Viktor Graef, piano.
 WESTMINSTER 18089. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Notwithstanding the lasting popular (or, as many now regard it, semi-popular) appeal of Grieg's piano concerto, his truest creativity found expression in smaller forms. It is in his songs, his marvelously wrought small pieces for piano, that the quintessential Grieg is to be met with. But unhappily, as Philip Miller remarks in his fine jacket notes to this disk, the temper of our post-Wagner time is still to equate mass with greatness, to regard the craftsman of little musics as almost automatically inconsequential, and to slight his works. Taking this into con-

sideration, it is perhaps remarkable that so many Grieg songs do get sung; but there are many more, and very fine ones, that turn up only ever so seldom in recital programs.

Hilde Rössl-Majdan, a rising young member of the Vienna Staatsoper roster, has as her main asset — and it is a considerable one — a warm, round, securely projected voice, called on the jacket a contralto but really closer to the mezzo-soprano in its most characteristic timbre. If not quite unflawed, her singing is firm, straightforward, with pleasant tone. And she is musically scrupulous according to her interpretative lights. These lights, however, are not really very bright. She does vary dynamics sensibly; she does pay attention to tone colorations, or does try; but the same patterns keep repeating themselves, so that long before the twenty-first song on the list, monotony has cast its shadow and listening with concentration becomes something of an effort. Still, it is wonderful to have a collection of this sort — by far the most extensive LP investigation of Grieg's vocal music — let alone have it so competently done. Viktor Graef's accompaniments are very reputable; the engineering is good. Recommended, but for consumption in moderate dosages. J. H., Jr.

HANDEL

Concertos (6) for Orchestra, Op. 3

Boyd Neel Orchestra. Boyd Neel, cond.
 LONDON LL 1130. 12-in. \$3.98.

In making Opus 3, the composer plagiarized, in his convenient way, from the works of Handel. Seven or eight of the twenty movements, and probably more, are familiar in other settings. This quickens an engaging kind of perplexity, the stranger recalling past intimacies; not that the six concertos are not engaging without this goad, in their Handelian bounce from grandiosity to frolic and thence to contemplation, everything in the bounding bundle except hypochondria



Slatkin: *Grieg's war horse comes to life.*

The music seems to have the sanest, most concrete kind of inspiration: Trooping the Color, the Good Book, Puss-in-the-Corner; and all juxtaposed. Hard to resist.

The performance has the broad, stout outlines usually given by this physician-conductor to his Handel, and the response of the players is one of consolidated sleekness in the even registration given to them.

The record has several advantages over the only other version: the use of two generous sides instead of three scantier ones, a sound of greater refinement, and a cleaner accord among the strings. But the Prohaska version (Vanguard) is in most of the concertos played with wider latitude, more variation, and more interest. Since London's favor in comparative cost is as four to ten, hers is the eloquence likely to prevail. C. G. B.

HANDEL

Water Music

Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.
 WESTMINSTER 18115. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Four complete *Water Musics* have appeared in the last year and a half, and none duplicates the sequence of the twenty pieces as they are presented by any other. In the absence of authoritative precedent or imperious logic, the Westminster directors have devised a new ordination peculiar to their record and holder in concept than that of any other version. "... we conceived the *Water Music* as a coherent suite of dance movements interconnected by concertante pieces of almost symphonic character. . . . we proceeded to reconstruct both instrumentation and order of selections." This we read in the notes of Dr. Kurt List, and thus we hear some mild surprises.

Very briefly stated, the music in this edition is reassembled into clusters of pieces related by tonality or form, with some repetitions inserted and some repeats omitted. Perhaps it makes no important difference. The *Water Music*, for all its occasional grandeur, is highly informal and sounds good no matter in what order its elements succeed each other. Important, however, to this record is the influence the concept has had on the execution heard as a whole: this is the least outdoored of performances, the Thames channeled into the concert hall. The playing, although robust enough, is refined and defined into nuances and niceties not imagined in other versions and not imaginable on a barge; all very fine, in this delicate seizure of civilized sound, if the hearer will forget the setting that gave the title.

To recapitulate the other versions best worth notice, the Hewitt-Haydn Society is the briskest and maybe too brisk; the Neel-London is the jolliest and maybe too jolly; the Lehmann-Archive is the most imposing (not the Lehmann-Decca plain) and the one with which the amiable high sophistication of Boult-Westminster ought to be compared.

C. G. B.

HANSON

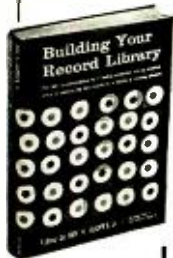
Symphony No. 5: Cherubic Hymn
 †Barber: *Symphony No. 1*

Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Eastman School of Music Chorus (in the Hymn), Howard Hanson, cond.
 MERCURY MC 400014. 12-in. \$3.98.

Whatever reservations one may have about Howard Hanson as a composer, one must go all out in admiration of his conductorial gifts. His performance of the Barber symphony forces a complete revision of one's attitude toward that far from obscure work. Previous recordings and performances have

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made it seem pale and well-mannered and guaranteed to do nothing much to anybody; Hanson, however, makes it sing, gives it body and strength and a genuinely impressive symphonic thrust. Needless to say, this result could scarcely have been achieved without superb co-operation from Mercury's recording staff. Hanson's own Fifth Symphony, subtitled *Sinfonia Sacra*, is all right, but the *Cherubic Hymn* is a major achievement. It is a tribute to the spirit and color of the Eastern Orthodox liturgy, and a very good one. A. F.

HAYDN

Divertimento in G—See Bach: *Sinfonia in B-flat*, Op. 18, No. 2.

HAYDN

Symphonies: Nos. 93-104 (The Twelve London Symphonies)

Vienna Staatsoper Orchestra (in Nos. 93, 94, 96, 98, 99, 101); Vienna Symphony Orchestra (in Nos. 95, 97, 100, 102, 103, 104), Hermann Scherchen, cond.

WESTMINSTER 6601. Six 12-in. \$33.50.

By unhesitant use of the added percussion instruments in two movements of the *Military Symphony*, No. 100, Hermann Scherchen battered his way to a recognition from discophiles that twenty years of musical scholarship had not been able to obtain from any considerable section of the general musical public. No. 100 was then backed by No. 95, replaced in the rational progression of the first complete edition by No. 99.

The twelve symphonies composed by Haydn during his two sojourns in London, Nos. 93 to 104, were the last he composed, and public attention has been concentrated on these to the neglect of eighty-odd of the earlier ninety-two. This is ludicrous, but the phonograph has given voice to about half of the oversights. Admittedly these London symphonies are unsurpassed in Haydn, but so are a dozen others in the production of a composer whose hottest admirers cannot make a consistent choice of favorites. But there is a homogeneity of pattern, orchestration, and mood in the last twelve symphonies that fits them well for consideration as a unit. Here in effect are more than five hours of imaginative and artful amiability in a cascade of splendor.

No other conductor has ever recorded all twelve. The various records containing the symphonies before their reprocess and rearrangement into a complete edition have been reviewed here, with lavish favor, as they separately appeared. It is not necessary, nor is there space, to detail here again the qualities brought by Dr. Scherchen and the engineers to make their statement of the twelve symphonies one of the most luminous monuments in the history of recording. In their new transference to disks plotted to the RIAA curve, their sound—which in the initial appearance was almost invariably excellent—is easier in reproduction, and those places with too much lash to the treble have been curbed to docility. The steadily impressive character of the sonics on all twelve of the sides warrants durability to Dr. Scherchen's monument.

The symphonies are distributed one to a side in numerical order, a squeeze for Nos. 103 and 104 which together last an hour. They are enclosed in a heavy and prepossessing album furnished with an illustrated book-

let containing (rather casual) notes by Dr. Karl Geiringer.

It is an album inspiring affection. C. G. B.

HONEGGER

Chant de joie—See Stravinsky: *Fire Bird Suite*.

HUMMEL

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 85

†Clementi: *Sonata for Piano, in B minor, Op. 40, No. 2*

Artur Balsam, piano; with Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Otto Ackermann, cond. (in the Concerto).

CONCERT HALL 1241. 12-in. \$4.98.

Mozart's pupil Hummel wrote a generous amount of music admired in his time, but the phonograph remains indifferent to all except a tiny fraction of it. The works recorded, including this glib and interesting concerto, reward the listener with a definite light pleasure. Mozart's influence on the present piece is less than Beethoven's and much less than Weber's, while the concerto's effect on the shaping of the two by Chopin needs no more illustration than one hearing. Artur Balsam, whose deft and polished playing is like what we read of Hummel's own, was a good choice for the solo part, and the sound of the piano manages its elegant involvements with crisp accuracy. The orchestra is subsidiary in the writing and in the performance, supplying punctuation and background, with smooth strings, and wind instruments a little mild.

Long reaches of the Clementi sonata sound like Beethoven, especially in the first movement: Beethoven studied Clementi, and he did not fail to study this work. Brilliant technical pianism here, how expressive the reviewer cannot say until he will have acquired familiarity with the music. The piano sound is soberly natural. C. G. B.

IPPOLITOV-IVANOV

Caucasian Sketches—See Grieg: *Peer Gynt Suites*.

LECUONA

Andalucia (Suite Española)—See Albéniz: *Cantos de España*.

LISZT

A Faust Symphony

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Ataulfo Argenta, cond.

Les Préludes

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ataulfo Argenta, cond.
LONDON LL 1303/4. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

For the second time Liszt's attractive but overly lengthy *Faust Symphony* has been recorded in its entirety except for the final section, a setting of the *Chorus Mysticus* for tenor solo and chorus, which he added later. If the composer thought that this section belonged to the symphony, why (except for reasons of economy) have Urania and London seen fit to leave it off? Not that the symphony isn't an entity without it; but with the choral part added, those who preferred not to hear it would have only to

Continued on page 65



building your record library

number thirty

PHILIP L. MILLER PICKS TEN DISKS
OF GOLDEN AGE VOCAL REPRINTS



THE COMPILATIONS on LP of recorded performances of artists of the past, though plenteous, have not solved the problems of collectors. The question where to start is a formidable one, and as one gets further into the game it seems impossible to avoid duplications. Many of the "recitals" have been thrown together in a haphazard manner, great performances appearing side by side with highly dispensable items. Even the singers of the "Golden Age" — a period, if we listen to all the claims, extending from 1877 (the year of Edison's invention) to 1948 (the birth date of LP) — were no more consistent and all-of-a-piece than their successors in our own time. In some cases the quality of the dubbings is so good that they may even seem an improvement on the originals; more often, however, they can be fully enjoyed only if no direct comparisons are made. In cutting out mechanical noises the engineers have frequently sacrificed vocal vitality. When the recording speeds have been carefully checked, the selections emerge in the correct keys and tempos; but this has not always been so, and I have not been able to compile the following list without some reservations on that point. How, then, shall we cover the "historical" field in ten disks with few compromises and no duplication?

The most monumental issue in this field so far is RCA Victor's *Fifty Years of Great Operatic Singing*, selected by Irving Kolodin, but this we must pass by because of its bulk (it runs to five disks) leaving it for the advanced opera specialist. So too the more recent Caruso program. The great tenor remains the biggest name in phonographic history; but so generous a portion of his works — three LPs' worth — is not for the beginner, while the particular specialist in early Caruso will want another disk, made from his Zonophone and G & T recordings of 1902 by Rococo Records.

Let us start with one of the most remarkable disks ever presented to avid operaphiles — Echoes of the Golden Age of Opera (IRCC 7006). Here are some twenty-two fragments of actual performances at the Metropolitan in New York, recorded (1901-3) with primitive apparatus by Lionel Mapleson, librarian of the company, at first in one of the boxes, later (after many complaints about the distracting noises) high above the stage. That so much could have been caught thus by the soft wax cylinders is noteworthy enough; amazingly little has been lost in the transfer to disks. Noisy as some of the recordings are, far away as the singers seem, something of the electrifying atmosphere of the live performances carries over. Those who know the commercial recordings of Sembrich and Melba will be thrilled by the uninhibited vitality of their bits from *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Traviata*, and *Huguenots*. The little we can hear of Jean de Reszke and Lucienne Bréval in spots from *Siegfried* and *Africaine* is very nearly all we are ever likely to have from these fabled artists. Other singers include Scotti, Galski, Nordica, Schumann-Heink, Calvé, and Campanari.

Next I have chosen two disks from RCA Victor's "Treasury" series as giving a fairly rounded picture, both in repertoire and in the representation of distinguished singers. The Golden Age at the Metropolitan (LCT 1006) brings us the Caruso of 1908 and 1909, and it ranges from a 1907 Calvé to a 1929 Ruffo. I have certain reservations about the Calvé "Habanera" from *Carmen* because she made a far better record of it with piano accompaniment, surprisingly as late as 1916. But Ponselle's *Ernani*, Rethberg's *Aida*, Bori's *Bobème*, and Journet's "Berceuse" from *Louise* will stand in any company. Tetrizzini and Galli-Curci show what can be done with bravura arias from *Sonnambula* and *Rigoletto*, and Chaliapin gives a sample of his unctuous Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* (a disk of selections from his unforgettable *Boris Godunov* would be included if my list could be stretched). Finally there is that greatest of Mozart recordings, McCormack's "Il mio tesoro." Farrar and Schipa complete the roster. Golden Duets (LCT 1004*) includes the first concerted record in which Caruso took part — the *Forza del Destino* duet with Scotti (1906) — together with his magnificent bout with

Ruffo in the vengeance duet from *Otello* (1914) and his tender *Faust* garden scene with Farrar (1910). The *Gioconda* duet of Gigli and Ruffo (never released until this program was assembled) proves again that powerfully dramatic singing was no discovery of the present generation. Magnificent vocalism may be studied in the *Aida* finale (Ponselle and Martinelli), the celebrated *Norma* duet (Ponselle and Telva), and — by no means least — the end of the first act of *Bobème* (Bori and McCormack).

From a series called "Famous Records of the Past," produced by Jack Caidin, I choose FRP 2 as the best rounded selection and perhaps the highest average of vocalism. There is a superlative performance of the first act aria from *Troiatore* by the youthful Ponselle, a splendidly free *Bobème* narrative by the young Martinelli, a vocally opulent *Faust* aria (in German) by Slezak, a stupendous tonal outpouring in "Piff paff" from *Huguenots* by Mardones, and Nordica's best recording — the dazzling air from the Hungarian opera *Hunyadi Laszlo*. Other selections by Renaud, Didur, and Campanari are by no means negligible.

Several first-rate interpretations of Gluck Arias (and Gluck is a composer to demonstrate how much or how little a singer has mastered in matters of style) are included on Eterna 495. The justly featured performance is Frida Leider's "Ab, si la liberté" from *Armide*; there is a beautiful first act ariso from *Orfeo* by the rich-voiced Emmi Leisner (in German), a superb "O del mio dolce ardor" by Hedwig von Debicka, and others by Rogatchewsky, Schipper, Balguerie, and Domgraf-Fassbaender. Passing from Gluck to Handel Arias (Eterna 488), we find the incredible "O had I Jubal's lyre" (in German) by Lilli Lehmann — whose two recitals on Eterna are omitted here with regret — Bispham's fine "O ruddier than the cherry," a lovely "Sweet bird" (in Italian) by Ritter-Ciampi, a virile "Sound an alarm" by Morgan Kingston, a respectable "Es blaut die Nacht" by Eva Liebenberg, and rather disappointing arias by Anselmi (better served in his Eterna recital) and Leisner.

RCA Victor's Wagner Treasury (LCT 1001*) cannot be overlooked, though one regrets the splitting of both Hans Sachs's monologues from *Meistersinger* in Schorr's superb performances (the breaks in the original two-sided 78s have been preserved) and the disadvantage under which Galski and Schumann-Heink labor with their acoustic recordings among so many electrics. Frida Leider is heard as Kundry, Rethberg as Elisabeth, and Lotte Lehmann as Sieglinde.

But we have had no songs. Lieder recordings (among which we include art songs of all languages) have such a reputation as miserable sellers that many of the great nonoperatic singers have not been considered for reissue. So again I compromise by listing a lieder and opera recital by Heinrich Rehkemper (Scala 809). Schubert, Schumann, and Wolf are represented in wonderfully intimate performances, while Mozart (Rehkemper's operatic forte) and Verdi round out the program. Two of Papageno's songs are the cream of the second side (*Figaro* and the Verdi pieces suffer some from translation). Leaving both the opera house and the staid concert hall, I feel I must include the incomparable *diseuse* Yvette Guilbert in a program of French *chansons* made in the 1920s. This is only a sample of a great and incredibly versatile art in which perfection of diction was combined with a musicality that triumphed over severe vocal limitations (Angel 64011).

Finally, for one sample of a classic opera cast I give you Rosenkavalier (RCA Victor LCT 6005*). There have been other Oktavians to equal the admirable Maria Olszewska, but Lotte Lehmann was the Marschallin of her time, and the role of Sophie was Elisabeth Schumann's own. Nor have we had another Ochs like Richard Mayr. The reproduction is happily still listenable, which certainly helps, though it is not the major consideration in a performance that touches greatness.

The records followed by an asterisk were marked for deletion in March, but copies may still be available.

With Fond Fidelity to George Frederick

SOSARME is an opera in three acts, sung in Italian, its scene the Lydia of antiquity. *Semele* is an opera in three acts, to the English of no less a man than Congreve. Its events are placed in the Greek Thebes and in soft retreats on Mount Olympus. Political circumstances no longer prevailing dictated the production of *Semele* in the aborted form of oratorio or dramatic cantata. On records all operas are oratorios, their action stimulated in our imagination by their music. No doubt before the Handel Bicentennial three years hence we shall have recordings of more of the operas and oratorios than anyone has been able to hear in public performance during the two centuries. So far what we have had has been tentative except ten *Messiahs*. The present pair of editions throw a sharper eye than usual on the problems of Handelian performance and point a pretty satisfactory course for imitation in the principal directions.

The fundamental problem is the recreation of very beautiful music, naturally, and next comes the necessity of giving dramatic illusion. In the first case we have affair with the archaic, and in the second with the obsolete. Taking the second first, we find that the Handel works for the stage are incompatible with modern expectations of the theater and impossible to mount successfully for any considerable audience except for occasional ceremonial, or in one of those revolting productions in which quaintness is used for a magnet. Neither the characters nor the sentiments which Handel illustrated, drawn from a heroic age, are known or comprehensible to the opera-audiences of today. The conventions of action, in the Handelian theater, are far too naive for acceptance without alteration: they would be laughed at now. In oratorio or on records there are no difficulties which the adaptable mind, imagining through the ears and not distressed by the eyes, cannot resolve. All the illusion necessary can be imparted by conscientious singers trying to impart it. Discophiles are especially fitted by training to let their dramatic fancies travel in the direction ordained by the music.

It is physically possible, then, but entirely impracticable, to represent Handel's stage action as the old librettos command. However, it is an entire impossibility to recreate Handel's most imposing music—the operas and oratorios—as the composer himself heard it. We have heard much of "authenticity" in connection with recent Handel performances; the word expresses a laudable aspiration and not a condition to be realized absolutely.

Our singers are not trained to the vocal style of Handel's day and cannot sing much of his music except in approximation of his declamatory and melodic lines. It is not to be expected that singers will devote themselves to the very arduous study of a kind of delivery for which there is only a small specialism of demand. Handel's highest roles were sung by eunuchs, and the most ambitious of today's impresarios must admit that a revival of caponization as an aid to art and faith

does not seem imminently feasible. Our wind instruments do not sound like those for which Handel wrote; and although his orchestra might contain some viols like ours, it would contain others dissimilar both to ours and to others of the same kind in the same Handelian orchestra. The composer often altered his work in response to changes of conditions and opportunities, and the nature of many of the alterations we do not exactly know and of course cannot imitate.

But if we are unable to make replicas of the eighteenth-century productions, we can avoid gross anachronisms, and we can make all the necessary departures from the Handelian customs seem right and natural, if we do not strain; and it is just this easy air of self-control, this disdain of portentous flurry, that make the pair of works presented here by Oiseau-Lyre worthy of praise for establishing a pattern that does not clash with preconceptions of style and does not fuss with scholarly preoccupations either.

In both *Semele* and *Sosarme* the orchestra on these records is small, strings and harpsichord in lonely control except for the interpolation of certain wind instruments here and there—oboes, horns, and trumpets; and timpani as a necessary accessory to Jupiter. A cello backs the harpsichord in accompanying much of the dry recitative, not dry at all in Handel's superb theatrical pungency.

There is no great singing here, although Miss Ritchie approaches it in "*Rendi'l sereno al ciglio*," but nearly everyone is competent and convincing, and there is no bothersome fumbling with the insoluble problem of providing the vocal ornaments which Handel left unwritten. The counter-tenor voice, is given work in both operas, prime work in *Sosarme*, Sosarme himself singing in such voice, to great effect in the ethereal duet "*Per le porte del tormento*"; but the artificiality is at home in one of the most meretricious librettos ever set by a great little composer, as dubious in its reality of character and event and place as *Aida*, and constructed with puny skill compared to Ghislanzoni's. But Handel provided a more deeply emotional music to the crude rot he had to set than Verdi could give to the sophisticated rot *he* transfigured. (No one believes in the tragedy of *Aida*: until one reflects, one is forced by Handel to believe in happenings equally factitious and operatic.)

The power of music is in *Sosarme*, a greater power of gentler music in the later *Semele*, graced by an airy pliancy of its verses and a tongue-in-cheek contemplation of the tragedy by the poet. *Semele* sings to her mirror:

Myself I shall adore,
If I persist in gazing.
No object sure before
Was ever half so pleasing.

And after her intemperate presumption has caused her death, the chorus—learning from Apollo that Bacchus will be born from her ashes—repudiates mourning:



Alfred Deller

Happy, happy shall we be,
Free from care, from sorrow free.

Imperial Handel found such worldliness to his liking and made the most of it. *Semele* is crowded with big and little felicities—not only such wondrous, celebrated things as "*O sleep*" and "*Where'er you walk*," but *Semele's* "*With fond desiring*" and "*Myself I shall adore*," the chorus of Loves and Zephyrs, the accompaniment and epilogue to Somnus' aria, again the accompaniment, the terrible anxiety to make unforgettable Jupiter's fear that she will have him kill her, and a continuously expressive recitative which will be a revelation to the many who think all recitative dull.

In both works, competent singing well stylized without importunity (and in places transcending competence), a direction in general spirited, and a union of effort in a lofty cause create a feeling of authority not to be questioned basically. The registration is equitable, avoiding grandeur and special effectiveness while keeping soloists, chorus, and orchestra distinct with no seriousness contemps. (Side 1 of *Sosarme* has several points of prominent seepage from adjoining grooves, and there is expected slight constraint in the blending of high voices.)

Both are recommended as great examples of a kind of music seldom heard, and unlikely to be heard by most music-lovers except on records. C. G. BURKE

HANDEL: *Semele*

Jennifer Vyvyan (s), *Semele*; Anna Polak (c), Juno; Helen Watts (c), Ino; John Whitworth (ctr-t), Athamas; William Herbert (t), Jupiter; George Prangnell (bs), Cadmus; George James (bs), Somnus. Saint Anthony Singers and New Symphony Orchestra (London), Anthony Lewis, cond.

OISEAU-LYRE 50098/100. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

Sosarme

Margaret Ritchie (s), Elmira; Nancy Evans (c), Erenice; Helen Watts (c), Melo; Alfred Deller (ctr-t), *Sosarme*; William Herbert (t), Haliat; John Kenrish (t), Argone; Ian Wallace (bs), Altomaro. Saint Anthony Singers and Saint Cecilia Orchestra (London), Anthony OISEAU-LYRE 50091/93. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

Lewis, cond.

lift the tone arm, whereas those who wanted the work complete could also be accommodated. Instead, London has given us the eighteenth *Les Préludes* on LP, admirably done but certainly not needed.

For what *is* here I have nothing but the highest praise. Argenta infuses the music with ample warmth and dramatic fervor, and the engineering values are equally high. P. A.

MESSAGER *Véronique*

Géori-Boué (s), Véronique; Roger Bourdin (b), Florestan; Mary Marquet (c), Emerance; Geneviève Moizan (c), Agathe; Marcel Carpentier (b), Coquenard; and others. Chorus and orchestra, Pierre Dervaux, cond. LONDON TW 91093/94. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

If your French is very good and your ear attuned to all the subtleties of colloquial French speech, AND if you are prepared to take an awful lot of it at one sitting, then you should be charmed by *Véronique*. Let's not pretend that the libretto is a masterpiece of wit, but it has its points, and anyway you can always sit back during the dialogue knowing that another of Messenger's sparkling little numbers is not far off. For make no mistake, this is a most elegant and graceful score in every respect, not just for the lovely melodies themselves, but also for the charming manner in which Messenger has orchestrated them. Nor does the music (written in 1898) betray any signs of old age; on the contrary, it sounds as fresh and gay as any musical comedy score of the past five years.

London has assembled an imposing cast headed by Mme. Géori-Boué and Roger Bourdin, both of the Paris Opéra, which might lead you to suppose that you are in for an ideal performance. Unfortunately, it doesn't turn out that way. Géori-Boué as Véronique is badly miscast; for though she sings her music stylishly, the voice sounds old, cutting, and shrill, so that one envisions a shrew rather than a charming *jeune fille*. Yvonne Printemps, at the same age, could create the illusion of youth that Géori-Boué misses completely. The Florestan of Roger Bourdin is more agreeable. At least some attempt is made to bring the character alive; and though he has a few bad moments, his singing is generally first-class. Geneviève Moizan is the outstanding member of a supporting cast that is otherwise completely undistinguished. On the whole, I don't think this matches the excerpts issued on Vox PL 21100, where no dialogue intrudes and where Marthe Angelici is delectable as Véronique. J. F. I.

MILLOECKER *Der Bettelstudent* (excerpts)

Emmy Loose (s), Trude Eipperle (s), Maria Wolf (ms), Karl Terkal (r), Rupert Glawitsch (t), Benno Kusche (bs). Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio (Munich), Werner Schmidt-Boelcke, cond. TELEFUNKEN TM 68039. 10-in. \$2.98.

Like various other Strauss-period operettas once of hit status on Broadway but now virtually forgotten here, Karl Millöcker's *Der Bettelstudent* is still a regular part of Austrian and German repertoires — and well so, for the score, which dates from 1882, has great dash and charm, as those who have heard either the recent two-disk Vanguard set or



Reiner: "every sparkle disciplined."

the Period single of excerpts will already know. Operetta fans who prefer to begin with small earfuls can get a very good notion of what the music is like from this new Telefunken release: it by no means exhausts the attractive tunes, but it does present some of the best, ordered in potpourri fashion. The playing is brisk and spirited, and the singing is clean and very alert stylistically. The most familiar name in the cast is, of course, that of Emmy Loose, but the richest single bit of operetta theater preserved — and it is only a bit here — is Benno Kusche's performance as the stiff-necked but amorous Colonel Ollendorf. The sounds he makes when he breaks off in the middle of lush romancing to deliver an angry chewing-out that ends in a vein-popping splutter are certainly among the more remarkable things on records; they could only have been learned first-hand. Apparently choleric officers are all of a breed no matter what their nation or branch of service. For this inclusion alone the little record would be worth while. Engineering: good. J. H., Jr.

MOMPOU
Impresiones intimas — See Granados:
Goyescas.

MOZART
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 27, in B-flat, K. 595
Sonata for Piano, No. 11, in A ("Alla-turca") K. 331

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. LONDON LL 1282. 12-in. \$3.98.

The concerto is prim, simple, as a matter of principle, in this performance wherein the Vienna Philharmonic, at its ripest, makes a point of slurring not one hemidemisemi-quaver. The larghetto is folkishly tender, sidestepping here deeper implications, but complicating the simple phrasing with orchestral niceties of pronounced refinement. Gay suggestions in the finale are minimized in an effort to have the concerto more of a piece, and the elegant attack, in luminous sound for the orchestra, evades a definite mood.

Elegance and restraint are deliberately dominant in the sonata, which must be admired even by those who would prefer a greater proportion of exuberance in the

rondo, whose calculated poise is part of an overriding plan. The bass of the piano rolls with a richly satisfying growl, a good companion for the luster of the orchestra, and notably cleaner and crisper than the treble. C. G. B.

MOZART
Divertimento No. 11, in D, K. 251
A Musical Joke, K. 522

Members of the NBC Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1952. 12-in. \$3.98.

The divertimento has the aloof gleam of gems on display at a fashionable jeweler's, every facet calculated, every sparkle disciplined. Nothing could be more proper for music as tidily groomed as this than the spotless assurance of the performance here, unified in spirit and stroke to the final nicety of good form and emotional neutrality. There are hearty divertimentos by Mozart but this is not one of them, and the superiority of this version over the Casals record — besides its patent superiority in sonics — is the acceptance by the NBC men and their conductor of the primary demands of fastidiousness, while the others attain a comparatively loose jauntiness, not unattractive, but less relevant.

The same expert precision adds salt to the bewildered trials in the *Musical Joke*, whose errors were never expounded in a suaver manner nor ever seemed more listenable — when the treble control has been used to diminish the glitter of a very bright and hard registration, which fortunately responds easily to modification and then is remarkable for etched definition. C. G. B.

MOZART
Divertimento No. 15, in B-flat, K. 287
Serenade No. 12, in C minor, K. 388

Sinfonietta, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1936. 12-in. \$3.98.

Tranquil playing, sensitive recording. Irresistible features and exasperating features. The octet of winds in the serenade cannot be heard on any of the six other records in such poised equilibrium; and the small body of strings (weak in bass) colored by a pair of horns, in the divertimento, demonstrate a technical comfort and tonal uncton hard to overpraise. There is no evidence that anyone imagined very hard, or studied very hard, to make the scores give up their inherent delight. By what may be hazard, four of the total of ten movements are beautifully expressive: the rest are as dispassionate as mannequins. C. G. B.

MOZART
Divertimento No. 17, in D, K. 334
Serenade No. 13, in G ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"), K. 525

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1966. 12-in. \$3.98.

Beautifully iced performances, nothing like them. The chill is not on the lustrous strings (except horns in the divertimento, the only instruments) but in the calculate aloofness of the phrasing hostile to sentiment not courtly. To the sophisticated ceremonial of *Eine k N*, this urbanity, in slightly ac-

celerated but of course unhurried graceful tread, brings the insuperable artificiality of a lying love-letter beautifully written. It is quite apart from the twenty-some other versions.

The same suavity of production, the same elegance of concept, the same delicate distinction of recorded sound — the same deprecation of vulgar man — are featured in the divertimento, and they may be thought less pleasing there. Three editions from Vienna are much warmer, and do not falter in musicianship. Only one of these, the Prohaska record for Vanguard, multiplies the string parts like the Reiner disk, but all three infuse the music with gusto. Granted the velvety mechanics of the newest version, it is pertinent to inquire does it divert most, or least, of these four? C. G. B.

MOZART

Litany (Eucharistic No. 2) in E-flat, K. 243; Litany (Loretine No. 2) in D, K. 195

Jennifer Vyvyan (s), Nancy Evans (c), William Herbert (t), George James (bs); Saint Anthony Singers and Boyd Neel Orchestra, Anthony Lewis, cond.

OISEAU-LYRE 50086/87. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

Formal confessions of penitence were not close to Mozart's great heart, and the wonder strikes that he could have conveyed any conviction at all through this kind of music, after his deadly abuse from the placeman archpriest Jerome Colloredo, who answered for divine forgiveness in Salzburg and had the genius booted from his palace. Devotion is not absent from the two litanies recorded here for the first time, but as in all of Mozart's earlier church music we are reminded that the opera is just around the corner. The lighter Loretine text is provided with a lighter and more engaging music than the Eucharistic, but the greater freedom of thought and immeasurably superior orchestration of the latter (provided with flutes, bassoons, and trombones in addition to the oboes, horns, and strings of the former) provide a deeper and more resistant interest.

Intricate sleight of voice is prescribed for tenor and high soprano, the latter realized here by a woman instead of a man specially treated. Miss Vyvyan is in process of becoming an inevitable reliance in the kind of vocal difficulty presented here, and her work must win praise for the most part. The tenor too, friendly and unpretentious, with a healthy candor substituting for high style, is in familiar precincts and cannot be disliked. The direction of the small chorus and adept orchestra is broad, lyrically supple and forbears overly in decision of accent. Generally good sound in all respects except orchestral articulation, in one or two places slighted to the point of disappearance.

C. G. B.

MOZART

Quartets: No. 6, in B-flat, K. 159; No. 7, in E-flat, K. 160; No. 8, in F, K. 168; No. 9, in A, K. 169

Barylli Quartet.

WESTMINSTER 18092. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Nimble performances, lively and unpretentious in appearance, but expert in organiza-



Markevitch: a quick wand for Mozart.

tion and with a beguiling effect of intimacy under a formal finish, as if the music were only for the hearer of the moment. There are perplexities of tone as such which can hardly result from deficiencies in registration, since that seems nowhere wayward, but on the contrary incisive and accurate. The tone has long stretches of neutralism, particularly in Quarter No. 6, which give way to an attractive glow in No. 7. This may be inherent in the writing, for a similar phenomenon can be remarked in another, comparable, edition. Where it appears the quality is not mean or distorted, but anonymous, and rather disappointing than disagreeable. C. G. B.

MOZART

Sinfonia concertante in E-flat, K. 364 Adagio for Violin and Orchestra, in E, K. 261

Rondo for Violin and Orchestra, in C, K. 373

Rondo concertante for Violin and Orchestra, in B-flat, K. 269

Nap de Klijn, violin; Paul Godwin, viola; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Bernhard Paumgartner, cond.

EPIC LC 3197. 12-in. \$3.98.

For convenience call the Rondos No. 1 and No. 2, and it may be noted that the earlier, K. 269, is somewhat better in this edition than in the only other one. That is the last thing one need note: the conductor is fatigued, the auditors will be, during a performance of the great K. 364 as naked of spirit and insight as one could possibly dread. The soloists cannot pull the inert orchestral mass with them and relapse into superficiality early in the first movement. No one ought to forget his previous version, whichever it may be, for this drear. Clumsy orchestral play in the Adagio, leaving to the Rondos the only laurels, the solo violin taking charge there. Dr. Paumgartner needs a rest. C. G. B.

MOZART

Symphony No. 14, in A, K. 114 — See J. C. Bach: Sinfonia in B-flat, Op. 18, No. 2.

MOZART

Anniversary Album

Symphonies: No. 26, in E-flat, K. 184, No. 29, in A, K. 201; No. 34, in C, K. 338; No. 38, in D (Prague), K. 504; No. 39, in E-flat, K. 543; No. 40, in G minor, K. 550; No. 41, in C (Jupiter), K. 551. Requiem Mass, in D minor, K. 626. Serenade No. 13, in G (Eine kleine Nachtmusik), K. 525. Sin-

fonia concertante in E-flat, KA. 9. Sinfonia concertante in E-flat, K. 364.

Various orchestras and conductors.

RCA CAMDEN CFL 105. Six 12-in. \$10.98.

It is a high pleasure to direct attention at an inexpensive record that does not sound cheap. There are more of these than might be thought, and Camden has some of them. But here the sound is artificial even when it is not unpleasant, and it cannot be called pleasant for half the contents of this omnibus. The original recordings were made long ago and apparently resist transfer from their 78-rpm sobriety to the giddier cycles of LP.

There is no occasion to bemoan the sound as a travesty of great performances: there are no great performances here. Some of the Koussevitzky and Walter work is good, notably several of the K finales; but there are more enlightening performances of all these symphonies, and none poorer of the two concerted works. It is best not to mention *Eine k N* (Walter-Vienna Philharmonic) and the Requiem (conducted by Harl McDonald) except in one aspect of the latter in this album: in the records received for review its first side — Side 11 in the automatic sequences adopted for the album — was occupied by a second copy of the Prague Symphony, probably the most successful of these recordings but hardly worth this kind of emphasis. It is probable that many other sets were issued with this embarrassment included. Discophiles who might want to own this curious version of the Requiem are advised to listen to Side 11 before purchase. C. G. B.

MOZART

Symphony No. 34, in C, K. 338

†Schubert: *Symphony No. 3, in D*

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond.

DECCA DL 9810. 12-in. \$3.98.

Both are played by what sounds like a full force of strings, unusual for either work, but telling in the Mozart with its burly first movement and impertinent effervescent finale; also in the fat minuet, K. 409, composed later than the rest and recorded elsewhere only in the Böhm version for London, with which this more decisive, less lyrical performance must be compared. Schubert's utterly individual recipe of beer and roses needs a good force of strings to balance its exuberant winds and drums, and its savory joy of life gains expressive virility when force is put behind its fortes. Its three quick movements, under Mr. Markevitch's quick wand, are the most infectious of the examples recorded. The allegretto, interpreted severely, is too fast for its gentle simplicity to imprint itself into memory as less precipitate statements do. It must be left to readers to determine if the rich gusto of the rest does not compensate for this stain, particularly in view of the robust sound, distinct in bite although covered with a long, warm reverberation. The Deccas coming from Berlin are in obvious and gratifying amelioration. C. G. B.

MOZART

Symphonies: No. 38, in D ("Prague"), K. 504; No. 39, in E-flat, K. 543

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

WESTMINSTER 18116 12-in \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

The record inaugurates a series without precedent: the registration of the forty-one symphonies of Mozart under the leadership of one conductor. The inscription, "Mozart: Symphonies, Vol. XI," seems to promise that the presentation will be in numerical order, a kind of rationale hitherto pretty generally despised in the recording of Mozart. It will be good to be able to locate a wanted symphony; and if the series remains as laudable as it starts, it will be good to hear the wanted symphony when it is located.

Mr. Leinsdorf, true to the honorable tradition exposed in a number of excellent records made for other companies, gives taut direction to both symphonies, 38 and 39, so different, on this first disk. They emerge direct and clean, unmodified by idiosyncrasy or novelty except in the very careful discrimination of instrumental quality and force. All the winds are arranged to be clearly heard, with a resultant tapestry dappled by new gleams and illustrative of little adventures released from obscurity for the first time on records. Like Dr. Reiner recently, Mr. Leinsdorf takes the andante of No. 39 at a quick clip; correct enough, but indifferently expressive when compared to a slower tread. No other exceptions to a first-class performance, and none to the delivery of the *Prague*.

Eleven more records are to come, full of thirty-nine more symphonies, and it is not naive to believe that most of the sordid spots visible now in the Mozart symphonic product as recorded will have been erased by the time the last is issued. C. G. B.

NYSTROEM

The Merchant of Venice (Theatre Suite No. 44); *Songs at Sea*

Stockholm Radio Orchestra, Tor Mann, cond. Aulikki Rautawaara, mezzo-soprano, in the songs.

WESTMINSTER 18147. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Since we hear far too little music from the Scandinavian countries, it is always good to make the acquaintance of another composer from the Northland. Gösta Nystroem, a contemporary Swedish musician, is definitely Nordic in his outlook, even though he studied with such Gallic masters as Vincent d'Indy and Camille Chevillard. If one is to judge from the works recorded here, he is no striking creator like Sibelius or Nielsen; yet he manages to turn out effective material, especially in the five atmospheric *Songs at Sea*. The *Merchant of Venice* suite is a bit lighter in texture, with an intentionally Italian flavor, but it makes very pleasing listening too. Neither the singing of the Finnish mezzo-soprano Aulikki Rautawaara (she of the old Glyndebourne *Figaro*) nor the conducting of Tor Mann is exceptional, but the interpretations are sound and serviceable. P. A.

PEPUSCH-AUSTIN

The Beggar's Opera

(Members of speaking cast are listed second.) Carmen Prietto (s) and Molly Lawson, Polly; Martha Lipton (ms) and Olive Gregg, Lucy; Marjorie Westbury (ms), Mrs. Peachum; William McAlpine (t) and Ian Sadler, Filch; Dennis Noble (b) and

Norman Shelley, Macheath; John Carnburn (b) and Ernest Jay, Lockit; Roderick Jones (bs) and Ivan Samson, Peachum. Singers of the Argo Chamber Ensemble and instrumental group, Richard Austin, cond. WESTMINSTER OPW 1201. Two 12-in. \$9.95.

Like so many other fascinating eighteenth-century things, *The Beggar's Opera* germinated first in the strange, original, brilliant mind of Jonathan Swift. As early as 1716 he let fall in a letter to Alexander Pope "what an odd pretty thing a Newgate pastoral might be." Since Newgate was the most notorious prison of the day, "odd" may seem a more proper adjective than "pretty." And it is sure that when, in 1728, the poet John Gay at last took up the idea, what he brought to being was odder than pretty and far closer to acid urban comedy than to any sort of pastoral. Writing highly, or lowly, vernacular dialogue and putting his own words to familiar tunes (which Christopher Pepusch harmonized), he ended with a piece that was partly a venomous topical satire on Walpole's government and partly a parodistic spoof of the newly popular Italian operas of Handel and Buononcini, with highwaymen and whores standing in for ministers and classic heroes and heroines all alike.

The novelty was an immediate success in London, with a run of some sixty-two performances during its first season, and its stage history on this side of the Atlantic goes back to the very beginnings. The version recorded here (by Argo, released by Westminster) is that of Frederick Austin. "with new settings of the *Airs* and additional music" by him. It had its première at the



Leinsdorf: thirty-nine Mozarts to come.

Lytic Theatre, Hamamersmith, in 1920, and ran for three-and-a-half years — or over 1,400 performances, not including fairly regular revivals. The harmonizations are not rigidly eighteenth-century, but they are generally clean and unfussy (nine players are listed in the recording credits, including such notables as Leon Goossens and Anthony Pini) and come about as close as most of us are likely to get to a twentieth-century counterpoise of the score as it was meant to be heard.

The cuts, however, approach the drastic — a fact that ought to be mentioned if for no other reason than that *The Beggar's Opera* is so notable a landmark in the history of

English theater and is so often included with full text and tunes in textbook anthologies. From the very start there are substantial verbal alterations. Speech after speech is telescoped without mercy; and close to a third of the specified *airs* are not to be heard, while others are shifted about. All that remains has character and to spare, but anyone hoping for an urtext *Beggar's Opera* is more than likely to be dissatisfied with what Westminster provides.

The new issue, quite adequately engineered in rather unvarying intimate perspective, is decently sung throughout, but rather less well acted. And it suffers somewhat from not very credible pairing of voices in sung and spoken sections of certain roles; why, for example, should Ian Sadler as Filch speak with a trace of what sounds like a stage-Welsh accent while William McAlpine as Filch sings standard British English? Carping aside, one can honestly say that Carmen Prietto sings often quite prettily as Polly Peachum, and Martha Lipton (the only American, I think, in the cast) carries off her duties as Lucy Lockit very capably (I almost wrote "with honor" — a phrase scarcely applicable to Lucy). The best of the men singers is Roderick Jones, who gives a strong, growly performance as Peachum. As Macheath, Dennis Noble is a disappointment — tight-voiced and mostly undashing — and his speaking counterpart, Norman Shelley, despite a certain style, manages to sound distressingly like George Sanders playing an English bouncer in a Hollywood film.

The instrumental ensemble is very good indeed, and Richard Austin sets live tempos. Even with cuts in the salty dialogue, even with numbers missing, this is always entertaining ballad-opera; and so, with reservations, recommended. Full text of the version used (if deviated from on occasion) is supplied. J. H., Jr.

PLANQUETTE

Les Cloues de Corneville

Louis Musy (b), Gaspard; Ernest Blanc (t), Le Marquis; Colette Riedinger (s), Serpolette; Huguette Boulangeot (s), Germaine; and others. Chorus and orchestra, Pierre Dervaux, cond.

LONDON TW 9114/15. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

Where French *opéra-comique* is concerned, the more things change the more they remain as they are. Old-fashioned and melodramatic as the plot of *Les Cloues de Corneville* may seem today, exactly the same sort of plot — changed possibly only as to locale — may be found in the pieces now playing at the Mogador or Chatelet theaters in Paris today. But what these modern pieces lack is the sort of robust, tuneful score Robert Planquette provided for *Les Cloues*. If it sounds a little dated now, what can one expect after eighty years? That it offers a bevy of fine tunes, some rousing choruses, and even some dramatic music cannot be denied.

It needs real singing, and fortunately that is exactly what it gets from this cast of outstanding operetta artists. Colette Riedinger, probably the finest performer in this field in Paris today, is a superb Serpolette, singing with charm and style, a combination rather rare in the modern French theater. The Marquis of Ernest Blanc is manly and attractive, and Louis Musy as the miser

Gaspard is always convincingly villainous. The whole performance is notable for its fine style, and a good deal of credit goes to Pierre Derieux for his brisk direction. The sound, a trifle on the dry side, is well forward and clean. If you are interested in what a certain A. Mortier wrote about the work in 1877, you will find it (in French) on both record sleeves. You won't find any text, either in English or French, nor will you discover anything about the plot.

J. F. I.

RAMEAU

Instrumental Music

Ruggero Gerlin, harpsichord; Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute; Roger Albin, cello; Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oiseau-Lyre, Louis de Froment, cond.

OISEAU-LYRE 50080/84. Five 12-in. \$24.90.

Complete Harpsichord Works

Robert Veyron-Lacroix, harpsichord.
WESTMINSTER WN 3303. Three 12-in. \$14.85.

The instrumental works of Rameau constitute a relatively small portion of his output. Of pieces for solo harpsichord there are three sets, published in 1706, 1724, and between 1727 and 1731 respectively, plus an individual composition — *La Dauphine* — and five transcriptions. The first of the sets does not contain much of outstanding interest, but the other two include some remarkable works which are marked by a noble elegance and (despite the profuse ornamentation characteristic of French harpsichord music of this period) a clarity and conciseness of facture.

They are well played in both albums. If Gerlin's phrasing is more sensitive, Veyron-Lacroix achieves more contrast in tempo and in color. The Westminster recording is brilliantly alive and clear. In the Oiseau-Lyre, despite its softer quality, the noises made by the harpsichord mechanism are plainly audible, though they are not in the other.

In addition to the solo harpsichord music, the Oiseau-Lyre album contains the rest of Rameau's instrumental works — the five *Pièces de Clavecin en Concerts*, which are suites for harpsichord, flute (or violin), and viol or a second violin (here a cello). These are mostly in three movements in the order fast-slow-fast. They are, surprisingly for this often grave composer, predominantly gay and lighthearted. There is also a set of six string sextets; five of these are transcriptions of the trios just mentioned and the sixth is a transcription of some of the solo harpsichord pieces. These transcriptions are probably by someone other than the composer.

The Westminster album is an unusually handsome one and contains an illustrated booklet of notes by Philip L. Miller. N. B.

RANGSTROM

King Eric's Songs; Divertimento elegiaco — See Alfvén: *Midsommervaka*.

RAVEL

Le Tombeau de Couperin — See Couperin: *Keyboard Music*.

SCARLATTI

Sonatas, Vol. 14

Fernando Valenti, harpsichord.

WESTMINSTER 18153. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

At least eight of the dozen pieces in this volume are out of Scarlatti's top drawer, and the other four are by no means negligible. Once more Valenti has varied his selections cleverly, giving us such works as the tempestuous sonata in G, Longo 81; the little pastoral scene in the same key, L. 79; the grand improvisation in D minor, L. 67; the poetic and rather elaborately constructed piece in A, L. 222; and the melancholy passion of the one in A minor, L. 392. His playing, too, seems to have gained in variety; there is more delicacy and nuance here than in some of the earlier volumes. N. B.

SCHOENBERG

Pierrot Lunaire

Ethel Semser, vocalist; Virtuoso Chamber Ensemble, René Leibowitz, cond.

WESTMINSTER 18143. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

This is the most beautiful *Pierrot Lunaire* I have ever heard; in fact, it is more beautiful than I thought *Pierrot Lunaire* could be, thanks to a superbly sensitive interpretation and an equally sensitive recording. Semser indulges in no screaming, explosions, or breathy scoops; she explores all the hair-drawn subtleties of the Schoenbergian *Sprechstimme* with magnificent skill and penetration, and the parallel subtleties of the instrumental fabric are handled with equal mastery by her collaborators. A great production in every respect, down to and including the provision of the text in German and English. A. F.

SCHUBERT

Fantasy in F minor, Op. 103 — See Brahms: *Hungarian Dances*.

SCHUBERT

Sonata for Piano, No. 21, in B-flat
Ländler, Op. 171

Leon Fleisher, piano.
COLUMBIA ML 5061. 12-in. \$3.98.

A delicate wizardry of startling digitation — a mechanism of nimbleness with the effort concealed — will by itself carry this pianist up and up to that curious heaven-on-earth imperiously ordained by adulating women at afternoon recitals in the big halls. There are higher heavens; and these are reached through sterner efforts whose results may be clumsier. The ultimate delicacy is achieved in Schubert's ultimate marvel for the piano, and it obtrudes like a courtier's rapier into the fight at Bastogne. The problems are made pianistic, and all this skill seems uncomfortably superficial after the records of Messrs. Kempff, Wührer, and Aitken.

The *Ländler* too have been scrubbed in the same limpid cool waters, giving the effect of a painted empty smile intent on not cracking. Great promise applied to a work too great, now; but music-lovers are urged to hear Mr. Fleisher's subsequent records, whatever their music may be, in the expectation that after the initial flash the pianist will get at the core. Good sound if the volume is kept low. C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 3, in D — See Mozart: *Symphony No. 34*.

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 3, in D — See Bruckner: *Symphony No. 8*.

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 6, in C

Iamberg Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond.

TELEFUNKEN LGM 65026. 10-in. \$2.98.

This is a delectable little record, and a revelation in the purity with which it presents the flute and the horn. These ears have never heard reproduction of those instruments in more convincing sonance.

However, a proviso must be submitted, that the reproducing apparatus be gauged to the record. Only one speaker-system out of several tried with this record could bring out a full succulence of the juices therein. Telefunkon put them there; and if they cannot be extracted, the failure is not the record's. It is a very good record in any reproduction, a jaunty performance — notwithstanding nice precision — of one of the most delectable symphonies ever composed, with a very clear and positive establishment sonically of the values of the small orchestra for which it was written. Less regularity in the finale would have been an improvement, but the record is emphatically the preference among five versions. C. G. B.

SCHUMANN

Carnaval, Op. 9; Kreisleriana, Op. 16

Geza Anda, piano.
ANGEL 35247. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.48).

These two sets of unabashed romantic extravaganzas probably combine immediacy and durability of appeal more strikingly than any other pair of works in Schumann's creation for the piano. This is their first union on one disk, nearly an hour of bright and supple fancy. Authoritative piano-sound, rich and distinct, as good as any Angel has produced, bears performances in which considerable freedom of expression is concealed within a calculated neatness of plan. The fantasies emerge complete and convincing, but unsullied and particularly vivid in the riddance of irrelevant pianistics. The pianistics are in fact here in quantity, but each little sketch of Schumann's has been accorded an individual style to endow it with an indelible outline. There is actually some of the formal sense of classical variations in this nevertheless stoutly romantic projection of twenty-nine highly colored tales. Remarkable. C. G. B.

SCHUMANN

Davidbündler Dances, Op. 6
Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in F minor,
Op. 14

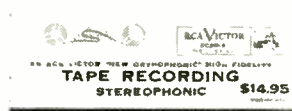
Friedrich Wührer, piano.
VOX PL 8860. 12-in. \$4.98.

The sprawling, prolix, and inflated F minor Sonata gives little stabs of real interest in material least relevant to the wavering linearity by which Schumann admits his discomfort in the sonata form of a more positive age. Perhaps a looser style of play than Mr. Wührer's could be more telling, but the literalism practised infuses a brightness of irony into its clarification of perspective, which a more fanciful translation could

Continued on page 70



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not do. In the *Dauidsbandler*, where the composer returns to the kind of disjointed short narratives nearest his genius, a scurrying, soaring, nervous fancy is needed and is not supplied by the pianist. Worthiness is regrettably too often dull. Room-filling reproduction, close to the listener and of good accuracy, best with a substantial measure of volume and a capacious room to be filled. C. G. B.

SCHUMANN

Etudes symphoniques, Op. 13; Kinderszenen, Op. 15

Paul Badura-Skoda, piano.
WESTMINSTER 18138. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

Schumann wrote five extra variations for his *Symphonic Etudes* that were published posthumously. Although four of the five (Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5) are comparable to the original set in quality, they are seldom performed. Mr. Badura-Skoda has worked the four mentioned into the scheme of the études for this recording. In addition to this valuable bonus, the performance is a good one — technically brilliant, with attractive readings of many phrases, though somewhat lightweight dramatically and lacking in breadth.

The *Kinderszenen* are completely satisfactory — tender, warm, guileless. Few pianists have captured so well the childish pomposity of *Important Event* or the hushed drowsiness of *Child Falling Asleep*. Only Clifford Curzon's version seems superior as a whole; without sacrificing the innocence of the music, he shapes the appealing Schumann phrases with an extra degree of expressiveness that Mr. Badura-Skoda may achieve when he is Mr. Curzon's age. R. E.

SCHUMANN

Novelletten, Op. 21

Jacqueline Blancard, piano.
LONDON LL 1266. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is the first LP of an obviously diarian set of eight pieces scintillant with romantic notions. It always gives an impression of disorder — although each section can be reconciled with an existing form — through its recurrent display of sudden staccato intrusions. It is perplexing because we sense pictures hidden behind and cannot identify them. Miss Blancard releases a high-grade pianism which lacks only color to make it altogether laudable; but the powerful, close recording requires considerable volume for good reproduction, and when we have obtained that reproduction, undeniably accurate, we find the closeness inimical to suavity and contrast. We demand the occasional relief of a true *piano*. It is interesting and suggestive that a record technically so good can be so uncomfortable. C. G. B.

SHOSTAKOVICH

Preludes and Fugues, Op. 87 (in part)

Dimitri Shostakovich, piano.
CONCERT HALL CHS 1314. 12-in. \$4.98

Opus 87, composed in 1951, would seem to be Shostakovich's finest composition for piano solo. Unfortunately only seven of its twenty-four preludes and fugues are provided on this disk; we could easily take them all, especially when recorded by the composer himself.

This work tends to confirm the widely

held theory that Soviet composers play safe in their large-scale things for general consumption, but let themselves go in music of more intimate character. At all events, the preludes and fugues are studies in style and structure, and in the relationship of the two; they rely on none of the familiar Shostakovich formulas, but reveal the searching, experimental side of this composer's nature at its strongest. The recording is good, the performance colossal. A. F.

SMETANA

The Bartered Bride (excerpts)

Hilde Zadek (s), Marie; Hans Hopt (t), Hans; Otto Edelmann (bs), Kezal. Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Wilhelm Loibner, cond.

EPIC LC 3181. 12-in. \$3.98.

In his accompanying notes for this set of excerpts, George Jellinek rightly observes that "in spite of the impression one might gain from some performances, this work is no Bohemian 'Opera Buffa,' and any emphasis on low comedy and gross exaggerations will distort the author's intentions." Another way to distort the captivating score is to treat it as anything less than the masterpiece it is. Jellinek points out that *Die verkaufte Braut* is a repertory staple in Germany and Austria. Perhaps even in Vienna, as sometimes here, a repertory staple may lose its freshness. In this country it has become customary for the frequent revivals to be presented in English, and recordings made in Prague have given us the opportunity of getting used to hearing it in the original Czech, which has a wonderfully amusing sound even for those of us who don't understand it. At this point I don't think the heavier German helps the music much.

Hilde Zadek, with her fine natural equipment, hasn't the vocal finesse to make a character of Marie (Marenka), and Hans Hopt treats the role of Hans (Jenik) as though it were Siegfried. Otto Edelmann, who should be a good Kezal (Kecal), enters into the spirit of the occasion and gives with all his lung power. Perhaps the major responsibility rests with the conductor, who — to put it in the most charitable way — apparently has no Czech blood in his veins. P. L. M.

SMETANA

Quartet No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")

†Glazunov: *Five Novellettes, Op. 15*

Hollywood String Quartet.
CAPITOL P 8331. 12-in. \$3.98.

This disk is especially welcome, since it offers the first completely satisfying performance and recording of the rich-hued, powerfully dramatic Smetana quartet *From My Life* — a sort of poor man's *Ein Heldenleben*, but often more easily and pleasantly digested. The Hollywood foursome, certainly one of the best quartets on records, plays this music for all it's worth, and their efforts have been reproduced with excellent fidelity. The Glazunov pieces are charming miniatures in a somewhat lighter vein, and are also admirably performed. P. A.

STRAUSS, JOHANN, JR.

Piano Miscellany

Artist's Life; Die Fledermaus; Wme, Women,

and Song (all arranged by Godowsky). *Treasure Waltz* (arr. by Dohnanyi). *Pizzicato Polka* (arr. by Schulhof).

Edith Farnadi, piano.
WESTMINSTER 18064. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98).

One of the chief contributors to the repertoire of piano transcriptions and paraphrases was Leopold Godowsky, who loved to elaborate pieces with a special kind of chromaticization of the harmony until everything he touched sounded alike. The results make display pieces of considerable charm, even when they do great violence to the original music, as in the case of eighteenth-century keyboard works. The Godowsky treatment also set a trend that has continued to this day — for his style of decoration is still prevalent in a lot of arrangements to be heard in concert halls and night clubs, particularly where two pianos are concerned.

Miss Farnadi has a real flair for these works, as she does for Liszt's (with which they have much in common). She does not lose sight of the basic tunes and dance rhythms, but she handles the decorative material with great delicacy, color, and appropriate capriciousness. Even when the technical difficulties confound her briefly, she never loses her verve. Many listeners should find the record good sport.

This Strauss collection lacks one of the most famous paraphrases — the Schulyer on the *Blue Danube* waltz. Most of it can be found done to a turn by Josef Lhevinne on a recent Camden reissue. R. E.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II

Waltzes

Emperor Waltz; Roses from the South; On the Beautiful Blue Danube; Voices of Spring

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7026. 12-in. \$7.50.

Of the recordings of Strauss waltzes that I know, Anton Paulik's on Vanguard have always seemed to me to steer the happiest course between Viennese sentiment and musical sensitivity. But now Artur Rodzinski comes close to displacing Mr. Paulik in my affections, for he shows a similarly scrupulous regard for tone, balance, and, above all, rhythmic precision in these generally carelessly played works. A few of his tempos are brisker than Paulik's, making the music less graceful but more danceable. The orchestra enters into the Viennese spirit with a wonderfully crisp style, and the sound is fabulous in its range and clarity. The dreamlike, murmurous opening of the *Blue Danube* is as delectable as anything I know on records. R. E.

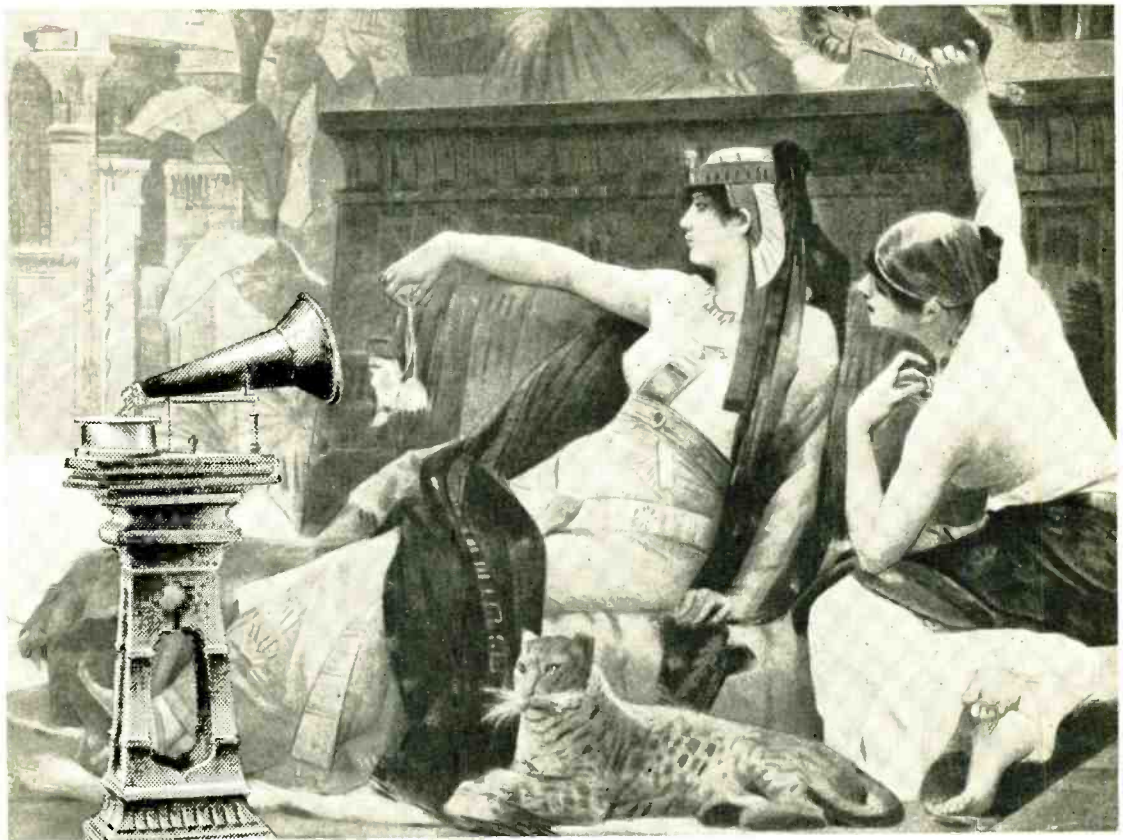
STRAUSS, JOHANN II

Der Zigeunerbaron (excerpts)

Uta Graf (s), Hedda Heusser (s), Rita Pich (s), Hans Rudolf Kaltenbach (t), Albert Kunz (t), Karl Pistorius (b), Mathias Schmidt (b), and others. Radio Zurich Chorus and Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond. MUSICAL MASTERPIECE SOCIETY M 130-OP 12. Two 10-in. \$3.78.

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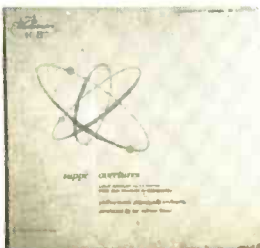
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version" of Johann Strauss's melodious operetta which is certainly worthy of respect. There is no point in comparing it with the complete recording on London, but this one has merits of its own, chiefly the sensitive and persuasive work of Uta Graf as Saffi, some free-wheeling tenoring by Albert Kunz as Barinkay, and the delightful vocal clowning of Karl Pistorius as Zsupan. Add to these a well-balanced and vigorous performance under the skillful guidance of Walter Goehr, good chorus work, and adequately clean sound, and you have an extremely attractive recording at a most reasonable price. Let's add a word of thanks and appreciation for the complete text, in both German and English, which this company supplies with the album. J. F. I.

STRAUSS, RICHARD

Don Juan, Op. 20; Till Eulenspiegel, Op. 28

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7016. 12-in. \$7.50.

How surprising, one thinks, that the Westminster Laboratory Series has allotted until now no record to the munificent orchestration of Richard Strauss. Where else such a fertility of brawling brilliance? Such a thunderous hullabaloo of crafty voices? And then one thinks, not so surprising. The sonic pre-eminence of this series is not evinced so much in tumult as in order and, above all, purity. Indeed a certain dynamic restriction is deliberately enforced upon these records in order to promote dynamic regularity and minimize distortion. A wider orchestral sweep can be obtained from other records of *Till* and *Don Juan*, and to satisfy the soul with the full crash of climaxes, the volume must be higher than usual, which will distend a little more the pianos, already a little louder by design than on most records.

A Furtwängler disk (RCA Victor LHMV 19), with both *Till* and *Don Juan* plus a pair of Weber overtures, can thunder a greater crash of finality and is in every way estimable; but this Laboratory record carries the special eloquence of the series in the transparent distinctness of the instrumental characteristics, all the instruments there and audible. More subsidiary detail can be heard from this disk than from all the other *Tills* and *Don Juans* combined, and the timbres have an immaculacy of imprint invaluable to the revelation of strong and subtle colors.

It may be that the conductor is a little intoxicated with the superb delineation and tone of his orchestra, the suave strings, the seductive solo violin, in *Don Juan*, where the erotic episodes are long fondled, and maybe it is right that he should be. At any rate, *Till* has a performance of deftly regimented, energetic, scalawaggety, no rascally trick lost in its most masterly recording. Encased, of course, in the luxurious triple layer of this series, with that wonderful zipper. C. G. B.

STRAUSS, RICHARD

Lieder

Ach Lieb, ich muss nun scheiden; Ach weh mir unglücklichstem Mann; Allerseelen; Heimkehr; Heimliche Aufforderung; Im Spätboot; Leises Lied; Lied des Steinklopfers; Mir deinen blauen Augen; Morgen; Die Nacht; Nachzügung; Nichts; Das Rosenband; Rube, meine Seele;

Traum durch die Dämmerung; Waldseligkeit; Zueignung

Norman Foster, bass-baritone; H. Schmidt, piano.
VOX PL 9610. 12-in. \$4.98.

Half of the eighteen songs are very familiar and half are rather obscure in the repertory. They are distributed on the record not in the alphabetical fashion above, but in a sequence to provide separation of the songs alike in mood. The singer has a pliant bass and he knows his métier. The strong temptation to lard the German art-song with ham — to lavish head tones, whispers, and shouts in illustration of texts already illustrated in music — has been stoutly repelled to favor a steadily controlled vocal delivery intelligently modulated in intensity and inflection to illumine the musical and emotional currents. Not many Strauss songs have been sung by men for LP, and this is the largest collection. There are no complications in a bland, realistic reproduction. Texts in German and in English are printed inside the cover. C. G. B.

STRAVINSKY

Fire Bird Suite

†Honegger: *Chant de joie*

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Hermann Scherchen, cond.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7032. 12-in. \$7.50.

A fine photograph of a familiar scene can, by virtue of its translation of the actual into the pictorial, call our attention to aspects of actuality which we have never seen before. A fine recording can do something similar. This ultra-high-fidelity registration of *The Fire Bird* brings forth some qualities of Stravinsky's instrumental fabric which one is very unlikely to notice in the concert hall. It lays special stress on the fact that a richly orchestrated chord is not merely a complex of its written notes but of all their upper partials as well. The tape makes more of these than does the ear under conditions of "live" performance; hence the pleasant paradox that an effort at the highest fidelity to "real" sound can lead to a super-real sound that has strong virtues of its own.

So far as recording is concerned, this, then, is the best of the numerous versions of *The Fire Bird* on LP. The interpretation is another story; Scherchen's approach lacks the luxurious serenity of Stokowski's so far as the slow movements are concerned, but it has plenty of energy in the fast ones, and on the whole is respectable if not overwhelming. The little *Chant de joie* of Honegger is a brilliant filler. A. F.

STRAVINSKY

The Fire Bird

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
LONDON LL 1272. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is the first complete *Fire Bird* to appear on disks. As such, it is of some interest, even if one is forced to conclude from it that the portions omitted from the suites are tedious and uninteresting; at least they are in this interpretation. That the interpretation may be at fault is shown by the rather listless character of the playing in the familiar movements. The recording, however, is gorgeous. A. F.

SUPPE

Overtures: Light Cavalry; Fatinitza; Poet and Peasant; Boccacchin

Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7033. 12-in. \$7.50.

Sir Adrian's honest readings and his orchestra's near-spotless playing of these overtures should help to wean listeners away from the association the music has with film cartoons and German street bands. As rousing theater or concert pieces these overtures are as good as they come, tuneful and astutely orchestrated. The sound is as glamorous as might be expected from the Westminster Laboratory Series. R. E.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Romeo and Juliet — See Dvorak: *Slavonic Dances*.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Suite No. 3, in G, Op. 55

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.
LONDON LL 1295. 12-in. \$3.98.

Of the three orchestral suites of Tchaikovsky, only the Third — thanks to the continued popularity of its final section, the delightful Theme and Variations — has managed to retain its place in the modern orchestral repertoire. A new recording of the complete suite has been needed for some time, for the one by Walter Goehr on Concert Hall CHS 1144 is a performance of little distinction, and its sound is barely acceptable by present-day standards. It would be fine, then, to be able to say that this Boult-directed performance fills the bill. Alas, such is not the case. The first three movements are managed with considerable success, if not always with all the nuance inherent in Tchaikovsky's writing. But with the finale, disaster overtakes the recording, as Boult — using some highly exaggerated and whimsical tempos — permits the section to rush along pell-mell and then sag sadly, so that all cohesion is lost. J. F. I.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 64

New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5075. 12-in. \$3.98.

A first hearing of this recording gave me the impression that everyone concerned had an off day; a second hearing confirmed it. The quality of the orchestral playing seems well below the Philharmonic's usual level; the engineers have produced an over-all sound that varies from being thick and murky to one that is of almost waferlike thinness; and the direction of Mitropoulos seems unusually lethargic throughout, with many fussy accentuations that fail to add any great illumination to the score but do retard its forward movement. For a few fleeting moments there are hints of the usual dynamism associated with this conductor, but not enough of them to offset the generally soggy air of the entire performance. J. F. I.

Continued on page 74

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TORELLI
Concerti Grossi, Op. 8

Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oise et Lyre, Louis Kaufman, cond.
OISEAU-LYRE OL 50089/90. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

There is some lovely music in these twelve early concertos, along with a bit of routine note-spinning. It was all made available last year in a handsome set issued by Vox. These works are hardly likely to rival the *Nutcracker Suite* in general appeal, so that the only logical reason for duplicating them would be a superior performance. This, unfortunately, they do not receive. The style of the violin playing displayed here

leans more towards the school of Leopold Auer than towards that of Corelli; and the realization of the continuo part is sometimes aimless and unconvincing. Nor does this set supply anything to parallel the detailed notes of the Vox album. The only advantage of these disks is the price. N H

VERDI
Il Trovatore

Maria Carena (s), Leonora; Olga de Franco (s), Inez; Irene Minghini-Cattaneo (ms), Azucena; Aureliano Pertile (t), Manrico; Giordano Callegari (c), Messenger, Ruiz; Apollo Granforte (b), Conte di Luna; Bruno Carmassi (bs), Ferrando; Antonio Gelli (bs), Old Gypsy. Members of chorus and

orchestra of La Scala (Milan), Carlo Sabajno, cond.

RCA CAMDEN CAL 289/90. Two 12-in. \$3.96.

In view of the popularity of *Il Trovatore*, it may seem surprising, at first blush, that the opera has not been more frequently recorded. After almost eight years of LP, there are only four versions current, and two of these — including the very welcome new Camden set — are reissues based on 78s. The reasons for this relative dearth are not far to seek: *Il Trovatore* is not at all easy to cast really well in all four major roles at once. In the opera house, it can take care of itself quite well, for its distribution of vocal duties and rewards is such that, given even one good singer, it can face what seem to be astonishing odds and still make a success — a fact that has been demonstrated thousands of times. But on a recording we want four top-quality artists.

Yet, ultimately, in the opera house or on records, an *Il Trovatore* is as good as — which is to say, can be no better than — its Azucena. Whatever individual triumphs the other members of the cast may have, it is the distraught, vengeful, adoring, wild-blooded old gypsy woman whose strange story is the dramatic mainspring of the work. It is this factor that makes the new Camden set the one that I myself would choose to keep if only one *Il Trovatore* on LP were to be allowed. For Irene Minghini-Cattaneo throws her impressive all into a vocal characterization that is full of vigor, life, and searing emotional communication that never flickers, even when her full-blown tone sometimes does. Her "*Sriddle la vampa*," "*Condotta ell'era in ceppi*," and (most especially) her scene in the Count's camp, are of the kind that make the *Trovatore*-vulnerable listener turn clean inside-out. She never sang in this country and her career was not a long one — perhaps because, like the comparably exciting Cloe Elmo during her Metropolitan years, she threw her whole body voice up to high notes with no regard for the inevitable destructive effects on vocal machinery. But when she had it, she apparently had a lot of it; and so she does in this set. Far from being a Stignani in technical control, she generates more electricity than her LP rivals, including Fedora Barbieri, whose school and temperament are less impressive and whose creamier voice is rather beside the point.

Known during some of the greatest days of opera in Milan as "Toscanini's tenor," Aureliano Pertile is in about the same degree — and in some of the same good ways — the best Manrico on records. A fine artist with exceptional vocal stage-sense (after retiring he headed the La Scala opera school), his was a strong, true, *drammatico* voice, without much plush but with tremendous thrust and capacity for urgent statement; whereas that of Jussi Bjoerling (RCA Victor) is undeniably on the lightweight side for such a part as Manrico though it too goes up to the interpolated C in "*Di quella pira*" and is employed with more grace in lyric passages. Neither Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, who was rather past it when the Cetra set was made (especially as regards pitch), nor Francesco Merli (Columbia), not at his potent best, offers real competition.

As Di Luna, Apollo Granforte is superb, the voice dark, solid as a rock, and propul-

The Brass Includes a Cannon



UNLESS someone wants to get stereophonic about it, there is no need for anyone to make another recording of the 1812 Overture. The eighteenth micro-groove version, just issued by Mercury, can be regarded as final, so far as I am concerned.

Indeed, I will not hesitate to call this a great record, though I must qualify this with two admissions. One is that it is a *tour de force*; the other, that the almost invariable final reaction to it is laughter. However, the Overture itself was frankly intended as a *tour de force* by Tchaikovsky, and Mercury's David Hall and Robert Fine have done nothing more than go along with his intent. And I think the reason people laugh when the finale arrives, and the cannon and the chimes start shaking their brains loose, is less that it is funny than that it is stupendous. Laughter is a common random nervous reaction to shock.

Of course, it *is* funny, too. It was — or would have been — in the original presentation Tchaikovsky had planned for it, with the conductor pushing electric buttons to fire sixteen field guns, and the monstrous bells of the Kremlin trying to outbellow them. (This outdoor premiere actually didn't come off.) Such wildly extravagant effects, one atop another, applied to content so broadly corny, are bound to sound grotesque to modern ears. So we laugh. But perhaps we laugh a little also because Tchaikovsky was so very, very good at this kind of thing and, much as it embarrasses us, he manages to move us — a little — just as he meant to.

The proper way to perform and produce an 1812 today, it seems to me, is not to attempt to refine it, but to go all-out after the effect Tchaikovsky had in mind. This is what Hall and Fine and conductor Antal Dorati have done. For the purely musical part of the production, the University of Minnesota Brass Band (Gerald Prescott, director) was combined with the brasses of the Minneapolis Symphony, to reinforce them at least during the finale. They can be heard when they come in, but they never get out of hand. In fact, they and everyone else seem to have been infected with the fun of the whole

venture. Dorati leads with a rapturous violence and, all in all, I think this is the most exciting reading of the Overture I've ever heard, quite apart from its decibels.

There is artistry, too, in the application of the decibels. Tchaikovsky would have settled for Crimean War breechloaders to create his 1812 effects. Fine and Hall went to West Point and prevailed on the authorities to let them use a 1761 brass cannon. The intrepid artilleryman who fired a maximum blank charge from this antique is not identified in the jacket notes; but he did very well, and the recorder picked up a splendid soul-satisfying thud, to be dubbed later into the master tape. With the Harkness Memorial chimes, the procedure was even more audacious. As well as recording them with startling immediacy, Fine and Hall also overlaid the bell clamor with a double-speed re-recording of itself, so that the listener feels himself almost showered with sound, much as a Muscovite may have when his city's thousand bell towers rang at once.

The inner band of the 1812 side of the disk is filled out with a commentary by Deems Taylor. He sounds a little anticlimactic, but it must be suspected that he's there principally to let the 1812 end well out in the trouble-free grooves, without letting the disk look vacant.

The *Capriccio italiano* is no throw-away item, either. Dorati plays it very nearly as well as the Overture, which is saying plenty.

A note of caution: not every pickup will track the final grooves of the 1812, and hardly any will do so repeatedly without abrading them. If you have a tape machine, make a copy and play that.

JOHN M. CONLY

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio italiano, Op. 45; Overture 1812, Op. 49*

Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra; University of Minnesota Brass Band; bronze cannon (Strasbourg, 1761); bells of the Harkness Memorial Tower, Yale University; Antal Dorati, cond. Spoken commentary by Deems Taylor.
MERCURY MG 50054. 12-in. \$4.98.

sive, his vocal-dramatic presence commanding (may not his fine lingo count points towards a Camden reissue of the old Victor *Otello*?). The least-good Camden principal is the Leonora, Maria Carena. Her scale is not well-equalized; and although her style is idiomatically and her passage-work acceptable her tone tends to shrillness at the top. Less absolutely painful to hear than Bianca Scacciati (Columbia), she has not the free-swinging abandon, nor the voice, of Caterina Mancini (Cetra), and she does not at all measure up to the challenge of Zinka Milanov's cannily taped RCA Victor singing.

Despite some tempo inconsistencies (this was cut on 78-rpm sides, recall), Carlo Sabajno's reading is incisive and altogether better than Renato Cellini's for the latter-day RCA, fully as good as either Carlo Molajoli's (*Entré*) or Fernando Previtali's (Cetra).

The Camden sound is dressier than the original 78s — highs cut down (to Miss Carena's benefit), echo techniques used to add a more spacious, and specious, resonance and some perspectives altered — but, taken four minutes at a time, the *circa*-1930 shellacs seem to me more satisfying, perhaps because they comprised the first full opera recording I ever owned. Still, the LPs are much to be preferred for convenience, and the filtering *has* cut down noise. No album, no libretto; but three superb vocal characterizations ought to be more than worth the modest price. J. H., Jr.

IVALDI

Concerto for Two Violins and Strings, in D, Pincherle 159; Concerto for Oboe and Strings, in D minor, P. 259; Concerto for Viola d'Amore and Strings, in D minor, P. 288

Louis Kaufman, Peter Rybar, violins; Egon Parolari, oboe; Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Clemens Dahinden, cond. (in the first two). Johan van Helden, viola d'amore; Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Otto Ackermann, cond. (in the third).

MUSICAL MASTERPIECE SOCIETY 84. 10-in. \$1.89.

Competent performances of three fine concertos. The work for oboe is No. 9 in Op. VIII, the set that begins with the *Four Seasons*. Parolari has an attractive tone. Van Helden is also a capable player, and his concerto contains a short but especially appealing Siciliano as a slow movement. No continuo is audible in the Concerto for Two Violins, and the recording on that side is only adequate. But it improves on the side containing the other two works, which employ a harpsichord. N. B.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

ALMA MUSICA

The Golden Line of Polyphony from Sweelinck to Mozart

Williaert: *Ricercar a tre voci*. Sweelinck: Six Variations on *Mein junges Leben hat ein End*. Giovanni Gabrieli: *Sonata a tre*. Vivaldi: Concerto in G minor, Op. 10, No. 2 (*La Notte*). Mozart: Adagio and

Fugue for String Trio, in D minor, K. 404a; Quartet for Flute and Strings, in C, KA 171.

Sextuor Instrumental Alma Musica. LONDON DTL 93046. 12-in. \$4.98.

The rather pretentious title is applied to a group of pieces that not only begins with Willaert rather than Sweelinck but ends with about as homophonic a work as Mozart ever wrote. Actually this is a pleasant, if somewhat miscellaneous, collection. The Fugue is Mozart's transcription of the E-flat minor Fugue in Book I of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and it is preceded by Mozart's own Adagio. It is good to have his Flute Quartet, a delightful little composition. The Vivaldi, which is for flute and strings, is here played by a group in which an oboe is also prominent. No doubt it was often so performed in the eighteenth century; if an oboist was present, he would want to join in the fun. But the work is available in its original form in good performances. N. B.

ROSE BAMPTON

Opera Arias

Gluck: *Alceste: Ah! malgré moi* *Non, ce n'est point un sacrifice*. Rossini: *Semiramide: Bel raggio lusinghier*. *La Cenerentola: Nacqui all'afano* . . . *Nou più mesta*. Mozart: *Don Giovanni: Era già alquanto* . . . *Or sai chi l'onore; Non mi dir*. Verdi: *Aida: O patria mia*. *Ernani: Ernani involami*. Puccini: *Tosca: Vissi d'arte*. Massenet: *Hérodiade: Il est doux, il est bon*.

Rose Bampton, soprano; Hardesty Johnson, tenor (in *Don Giovanni*). Victor Symphony Orchestra, Wilfred Pelletier, cond. RCA CAMDEN CAL 293. 12-in. \$1.98.

Had Rose Bampton been born into another vocal age, she might have fared differently, for her voice was, and remains, a splendid one, controlled by superior musicianship. As matters stand, though, her career can best be described as unfulfilled — this to avoid grinding the edge of the private conviction that she has been one of the most undervalued singers of the past twenty-odd years.

Calling herself a contralto, no less, she made her Metropolitan debut, as Laura in *La Gioconda*, in 1932. Then she decided to exercise the remarkable extension of her voice and become a soprano — a *Trovatore* Leonora, an *Aida*, and, later, a *Fidelio* and a *Marschallin*. Although the scale never became absolutely even between top and middle registers (few scales are, for that matter), she made the transition with more than usual success. But for all the great beauty of her voice, for all her excellent musicianship, she never really rose to the level of a great career from that of a good one, and now she has virtually given up opera for concert and recital appearances. Somehow the artistic-personal adjustments she made did not solve the problems of having been created a mezzo-soprano with a long voice and an essentially classic, restrained temperament. And the failure — a failure by only a small margin — shows in this Camden reissue from 78s. For when the singing comes short of being first-class, it does so either by the margin of not having either quite the expression-through-tech-

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nique of the finest classic vocalism or the eartheness of the finest veristic.

Yet at her best Miss Bampton is very good indeed, and she is at her best in the French repertoire here—partly, perhaps, because of the influence of her conductor husband, Wilfred Pelletier, partly because of natural affinity. Her "Amour, l'ardente flamme," from *La Damnation de Faust*, has already been put on LP in *Fifty Years of Great Operatic Singing*, and on this disk the finest single performance is Miss Bampton's sweepingly phrased and delicately shaded delivery of the *Alceste* scena. "Ermani involami" is sufficiently abstract for her and is sung expertly, with big line and ripe tone; but the difficult cabaletta finds her making heavy weather, though singing full-out and intrepidly. Similarly, both of the Mozart arias are done with style and a good deal of art, it without true inner tension of phrase. The *Cenerentola* finale is sung very well by present standards, but misses the brilliance and joy-in-coloratura that it needs if taken in context; the *Semiramide* has the same essential qualities. The *Hérodiade* is so lush in sound that no exception seems reasonable. All told, this is the singing of a fine, intelligent artist.

The sound of the LP does not often fall below the level of the generally good '88, and the changes in resonance, perspective, and so on are not extreme. No texts, no notes, but recommended. J. H. JR.

CHINESE OPERA
Peking Opera Ensemble

Eight excerpts and fragments from Chinese classical opera: *The Court of the Phoenix; The White Serpent; Moonlight on the Springtime River; The Farewell to the Favorite; The Return of the Fisherman; The Three Scourges; Song of the Yunnan Province; Dance to a Drum.*

Official Ensemble of the Chinese People's Republic, from the Peking Opera. ANGEL 35229/L. 12-in. \$5.98.

Just a little less than a year ago, in July 1955, an ensemble from the Peking Opera appeared in Paris to take part in the second International Theater Festival. Almost overnight, by all accounts, this Chinese troupe became the fashionable rage, in much the same way that Hindu and Balinese dance groups have been feted in New York. Reviewer after reviewer exclaimed that the impact on Paris was the greatest since the first visits of the Diaghilev Ballets Russes. Now Angel has issued a recording given over to essentially the same program of excerpts that was offered in Paris.

Although no complete works are to be heard here, the fragments are said by those who might be expected to know to be fairly well chosen as an introductory survey. These opera-plays (for much of the text is spoken, or, rather, intoned) all date from the second half of the nineteenth century, though the literary roots go back some five hundred years to the Yuan dynasty and the Mongol conquest, the musical roots two thousand. None has the name of a composer or librettist attached to it, and the instrumentalists do not play from scores, instead taking their cues from well-established conventions as indicated by the singers on stage. Yet the traditions

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are so thoroughly ingrained (members of the Peking company begin training at the age of six) that it would be misleading to describe Chinese opera as merely stylized drama with instrumental obbligato. Even without the make-up and the highly formal movement techniques, it is obvious — perhaps too obvious — that this is a complex kind of musical theater that might take years of concentrated effort to understand. And when not understood it can be somewhat trying.

The first band is called *The Court of the Phoenix*, and, according to the booklet notes, "evokes and describes the song of birds." The effect, apart from a certain organization, is roughly that of a trip to the tropical bird house at any moderately well-appointed zoo. Band 2, *The White Serpent*, presents a falsetto in the dilemma of having married a serpent-woman; the only really happy thing about it is the thought that Melusine came from East of Suez, and then some. It may be the very loveliest Chinese operatic excerpt to be heard, but even after weeks of listening to it, off and on, it sounds unpleasantly like generalized wailing. Band 3, *Moonlight on the Springtime River*, is rather lovely even the first time, and becomes (or seems to become) more evocative with each rehearing. Band 4, *The Farewell to the Favorite*, sounds like chaos. Band 1 on Side 2, *The Return of the Fisherman*, makes — apart from difficulties with intermediate woodwind pitches — as pleasant an effect as does *Moonlight on the Springtime River*. Band 2, *The Three Scourges*, lives up to its name with a vengeance; with nothing to look at and no Mandarin, it is quite incomprehensible, even with an English text. Band 3, *Song of the Yunnan Province*, which — like the number before it — may or may not be legitimately opera, is very lovely; whether the comment misses the point or not, it sounds not unlike a Cantaloube-collected French provincial song, and Miss Chang Chia-Ling has a very attractive voice. The final band, *Dance to a Drum*, also comes closer to Western modes; it sounds like a Chinese realization of some Russian-appropriated orientalism, which may possibly indicate that the Peking Opera program presented in Paris had been subjected to a sort of Soviet-style Hurokizing, just as some Hindu dancers seen in this country have been subjected to managerial influences so as to make their efforts more palatable.

This record cannot help raising the question whether Chinese opera can be truly meaningful to non-Chinese ears, especially when the visual element is totally lacking. Reactions are sure to be as varied as the individuals who have them. My own is that it may possibly seem meaningful, but scarcely ever in the terms intended by its creators. In any case, the disk should appeal to lovers of the esoteric.

The engineering is quite adequate, or seems so to a listener ignorant of the live performances. Translated texts, and notes that while superficially helpful are not really very informative. J. H., JR.

THURSTON DART
Masters of Early English Keyboard Music, Vol. 1

Thurston Dart, organ, harpsichord, clavichord.
OISEAU-LYRE OL 50075/76. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

Thurston Dart was one of the musicians who took part in London Records' Special Commemorative Coronation Release called *Early English Keyboard Music*, and in a way this new Oiseau-Lyre issue might be thought of as an extension of the commemorative album. The latter was devoted pretty much to masterworks by well-known composers. The new disks, more of a survey and covering a greater span of time, offer works not always on quite such a musically elevated level. The repertoire differs completely save for two instances, the *Salisbury* pavanes and galliards of Gibbons and Byrd. However, Mr. Dart did not play these particular works in the earlier recording, and his interpretations have an exceptional courtliness and dignity.

Quite expectably Byrd's music is the richest in melody, rhythmic variety, and decorative invention, but the best music of his pupil Tomkins is scarcely less rewarding than that of the master. The other works, ranging from the primitive-sounding, fourteenth-century *Retroue* to the glittering, eighteenth-century, Scarlatti *Allegro* in F of Arne, command interest, but sometimes only of a purely historical nature.

Mr. Dart plays on three instruments: a bureau organ made by Snetzler about 1760, whose spare, neat sound is one of the chief delights of the recordings; a two-manual harpsichord made by Thomas Goff in 1950; and a gently beguiling clavichord, also made by Goff, which gives added expressiveness to the music played on it.

Besides playing with vitality and stylistic authority, Mr. Dart has edited and filled out much of the music, in thoroughly tasteful fashion, and he provides brief, explicit, scholarly notes about the music.

R. E.

DELLER CONSORT
The English Madrigal School, Vol. 1
Morley: *Ho! who comes here?: Sweet Nymph, Weelkes: Cease, sorrow, now: To shorten Winter's sadness: O Care, thou wilt despatch me: The Ape, the Monkey, and the Baboon: Strike it up, Tabor, Vautour: Muther, I will have a husband, Richard Edwards: In going to my naked bed, John Bartlett: Of all the birds that I do know, John Bennet: All creatures now are merry: Weep, O mine eyes, Wilbye: Oft have I vowed, John Ward: *Hope of my heart*.*

Deller Consort, Alfred Deller, cond.
VANGUARD VG 553. 12-in. \$4.98.

This recording would be worth having if only for one madrigal in it, Weelkes's *O Care, thou wilt despatch me*. So amazing are its bold dissonances, so moving its subtle harmonies, so sustained its limpid polyphony, that it is quite rightly called by the annotator "perhaps the most beautiful of [Weelkes's] secular vocal compositions." But almost every work on this record seems like a masterpiece — whether the mood is gay, satirical, lovesick, or boisterous — and always the lyrical beauty of the poetry is perfectly matched with the expressive beauty of the music. The six voices of the Deller Consort have an in-

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strumental purity that makes a perfect blend for this music. (The voice of one soprano—Miss Cantelo?—has more vibrato and warmth than the others, but not disturbingly so.) The presence of Mr. Deller as director assures the stylistic security of the performances. Labeled Vol. 1, this disk whets the appetite for future issues. Highly recommended. R. E.

MARIA JERITZA

Opera Arias

Massenet: *Hérodiade: Il est doux, il est bon. Thaïs: L'Amour est un vertu rare.* Tchaikovsky: *Jeanne d'Arc: Adieu forêts.* Bizet: *Carmen: L'Amour est un oiseau rebelle (Habanera); Les tringles des sœurs (Chanson bohème).* Gluck: *Alceste: Divinités du Styx.* Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Suicidio!*; Puccini: *Tosca: Vissi d'arte.* Wagner: *Lohengrin: Einsam in träuben Tagen. Tannhäuser: Elisabeths Gebet. Die Walküre: War es so schmalich? Der Fliegende Holländer: Trafft ihr das Schiff.*

Maria Jeritza, soprano; Merle Alcock, mezzo-soprano (in *Carmen*); orchestra. RCA CAMDEN CAL 275. 12-in. \$1.98.

Although she has made fairly recent appearances both in this country and in her ever-adoring Vienna, as Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* and as Tosca (a role in which she was one of Puccini's favorites), Maria Jeritza has nearly brought to an end her distinguished career, a career that began well over forty years ago. All the more cause to be delighted at the issue of this LP miscellany from her operatic 78s—except that the RCA engineers apparently either napped while it was being made or kept themselves awake by exercising perverse ingenuity. This is a great pity. For though Mme. Jeritza (like other notable operatic actresses, including, for one, Mary Garden) got latterly something of the reputation of being a great personality rather than a great singer, she was, in fact, a splendid vocalist at best and never less than a compelling one. Not all the performances re-released here are of her very best, but they certainly deserve better treatment than they have been given. The trouble is that eternal bugbear of 78-to-LP reissues: pitch.

At standard LP speed, something like half of the arias offered sound sharp by as much as a half-tone, quite enough to alter the timbre of the voice substantially, let alone prejudice other musical values. It is true that some Victor 78s of the 1930 period were cut to run fast and so, presumably, sound more brilliant, but spot-checking of originals against the LP bands here makes this explanation inapplicable. Of course, it is possible—given a variable-speed turntable, a pitch pipe, all the originals, and scores of all the operas represented—to set matters to rights. But this is asking rather much of the average listener who has paid out his \$1.98 to get an accurate idea of how Mme. Jeritza sounded in particular arias. In her case the effect of this mysterious mechanical sharpening and speeding is especially misleading; for her voice was a forward, clean-cut, bright one, without great depth of color perspective, and speeded up a semitone it sounds thin and rather peepy and lacking in punch—things it certainly was not, as witness her success in *Turandot*

at the Metropolitan. This kind of *gaffe* is bad enough when it comes from a small, understaffed company; from such a company as RCA it seems inexcusable.

Suitably adjusted as to pitch, the performances are all well worth hearing, though in some instances the singer made artistically superior pre-electric versions; and even with the sharpened bands as they are (but the bass picked up) the temperament and inner vitality tell. It is not seamless singing, much of it, but it is all truly of the opera house, and the "Vissi d'arte" alone is worth the price of the whole disk. But no one should give away the 78s—particularly those who are lucky enough to own Jeritza's recording of Marietta's lute song from Korngold's *Die Tote Stadt*, which unaccountably was not included in this reissue. No texts; no notes.

J. H., JR.

MILIZA KORJUS

Arias and Songs

Verdi: *Ernani: Ernani involami. I Vespri Siciliani: Bolero.* Mozart: *Die Zauberflöte: Der Hölle Rache.* Delibes: *Lakmé: Bell Song* (in Italian). Adam: *Le Toréador: Variations on Ab, vous dirai-je, maman?* Arditi: *Parla Valse: Il Bacio.* Strauss: *Die Fledermaus: Mein Herr Marquis. Frühlingstimmen.* Denza: *Funiculi, Funicula.* Strauss-Hammerstein: *One Day When We Were Young.* Tiomkin (arr.): *There Will Come a Time.* Proch: Air and Variations.

Miliza Korjus, soprano; various orchestras and conductors. RCA CAMDEN CAL 279. 12-in. \$1.98.

I distinctly remember my first impression of the Korjus voice, some time in the mid-Thirties. One day in the lamented Gramophone Shop I was handed an HMV record of her *Ab, vous dirai-je, maman?* with the suggestion that it was worth hearing. I bought it, of course, and over the years have had my money's worth many times over. Nothing like this had been heard since the heydays of Frieda Hempel and Galli-Curci, unless perhaps from Toti dal Monte.

For a while I watched the lists for new Korjus imports; and of course a few of her recordings actually found their way into the domestic Victor catalogue. Then she went to Hollywood. I cannot say that she ever again quite equaled that first recording, though some of the others were (and are) phenomenally brilliant. Nor did she maintain at all times the purity of her intonation, as witness her performances of the *Ernani* and *Vespri Siciliani* numbers included here, dazzling as they are in certain respects. But her Queen of the Night aria remained for a time the only acceptable electric recording; what it lacks in dramatic force seems more apparent now. Korjus does the Arditi waltzes and the Proch *Variations* well without making them seem more important than they are. I like the *Fledermaus* piece less, partly because it is sung in unintelligible Spanish; and *One Day When We Were Young* is not nearly so good a number as the duet from *Der Zigeunerbaron* upon which it is based.

The dubbings are quite successful, though I found I had to cut a brilliant edge off the voice before it sounded natural. P. L. M.

SINGING BOYS OF MEXICO

Singing Boys of Mexico (Ninos Cantores de Morelia), Romano Picutti, cond. PERIOD SPL 1625. 12-in. \$5.95.

A virtuosic, well-disciplined ensemble, the Singing Boys of Mexico make sounds that are more often shrill than appealing. Part of the trouble, I think, is that their repertoire consists largely of ornate, sometimes offensive, arrangements of folk or popular songs. The group sounds best in its least pretentious and most sentimental numbers, such as the *Cancion de Cuna*—a lullaby of the Virgin Mary, of Austrian origin. Schubert's setting of the Twenty-third Psalm, also sung in Spanish, is likewise tonally attractive, because of its melodic and harmonic simplicity. R. E.

GLADYS SWARTHOUT

Opera Arias

Gounod: *Roméo et Juliette: Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle? Faust: Faites-lui mes vœux.* Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila: Amour, viens aider; Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix.* Bizet: *Carmen: L'Amour est un oiseau rebelle (Habanera); Près des remparts de Seville (Séguidille).* Thomas: *Mignon: Connais-tu le pays?; Je connais un pauvre enfant (Styrienne).*

Gladys Swarthout, mezzo-soprano; Victor Orchestra, Wilfred Pelletier, cond.; orchestra, Alexander Smallens, cond. (in *Samson et Dalila* and *Mignon*). RCA CAMDEN CAL 273. 12-in. \$1.98.

If not one of the very greatest names among singers, Gladys Swarthout's surely deserves a place among those of well-above-average professional accomplishment. And—although it may seem ungallant to make a point of it, since she is still active, and charming, as a recitalist—she occupies a rather interesting place in the history of American operatic singing; for her career bridges what might otherwise be a gap between generations. Born in Missouri, she made her first public appearances (to go by managerial arithmetic) at the age of twelve; her officially mature operatic debut was in Chicago in 1924. Mary Garden was still in full control; Rosa Raisa and Claudia Muzio were at their peaks; Toti dal Monte was making her first American appearances. In Chicago, and at the Metropolitan at first, the Swarthout roles were mainly secondary—Frederick in *Mignon*, Siebel in *Faust*, Stéphano in *Roméo et Juliette*. Then, with the retirement of Marion Telva, she was promoted to Adalgisa status, and later became a Carmen rather than a Mercédès. Through it all she maintained and improved the gifts she had—a very good and truly mezzo voice (if one with an odd, characteristic break in quality between registers) and a personality so attractive that it led her into the movies (remember *Rose of the Rancho*?). She was, in fact, successor to the generation of Telva and Homer and, at the same time, the precursor and contemporary of the generations of Risé Stevens and the present crop of mezzo-soprano hopefuls.

This Camden reissue of 78-rpm recordings made in the 1930-40 period gives a very good idea of Miss Swarthout's best singing. The voice is ripe and plummy

in the middle and lower ranges and (apart from some everybody-does-it scooping in the *Faust* aria) securely placed at the top. There is not really enough weight to it for the *Samson et Dalila* excerpts, but that is a familiar disability nowadays, and the interpretation is thoroughly professional. Perhaps the best singing is as Stéphanos and Frederick; for if the style here is sometimes on the broad side, the vocalization is quite sure and the interpretation musicianly and never lacking in liveliness. The sound from the grooves is variable according to original dates, the transfers to LP well done. J. H., JR.

FOLK MUSIC

by Howard LaFay

Laurindo Almeida

Guitar Music of Latin America

Laurindo Almeida, guitar.
CAPITOL P 8321. 12-in. \$3.98.

Perhaps never before has such purity of recorded sound been lavished on a guitar recital. Almeida matches the achievement of the engineers with masterful, moody readings of a dozen South American guitar compositions. Not the least surprise of the disk is the exceedingly high quality of the music. The Villa-Lobos études in particular are small-scale gems.

Margaret Barry

Songs of an Irish Tinker Lady

She Moves Through the Fair; The Cycling Champion of Ulster; The Factory Girl; The Hills of Donegal; The Turfman from Ardee; Moses Ritoorel-i-ay; My Lagan Love; The Galway Shawl; The Bold Fenian Men; The Flower of Sweet Strabane; The Cottage with the Horseshoe o'er the Door; Belfast Hornpipe.

Margaret Barry, with banjo accompaniment.
RIVERSIDE RLP 12-602. 12-in. \$4.98.

Margaret Barry is in her forties, toothless, and lank of hair. A one-time nomad on the roads of Ireland, she now works as cook or dishwasher until "I get to thinking about a tune and the next thing I know, the meat's burned to a cinder or the sink's overflowing and flooding the place. I just haven't got the heart for anything but singing." So, with her battered five-string banjo, she inevitably drifts away to a likely street corner or country fair where she can give her heart full play.

In the Irish volume (SL 204) of Alan Lomax's *Columbia World Library of Folk and Primitive Music*, Margaret Barry sang two brief stanzas of *She Moves Through the Fair*. It was the most memorable item on that memorable disk. Now, in a well-engineered record, Riverside offers a fulsome sequel to that solitary song. Let it be said immediately that Miss Barry's voice is an imperfect instrument. It is coarse and wobbly; it shows the erosion of long use under less than optimal conditions. But it remains a voice without compare in its ability to convey stark, uncomplicated emotional moods that tran-

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"The Man With The Golden Arm": *Music from the Sound Track of the Otto Preminger film; E. Bernstein & Orch., Shorty Rogers & Shelly Manne**.* Pete Candoli, others. (DL 8257, ED 2335-6)



Rock Around The Clock: *Bill Haley and his Comets; 'A. B. C. Boogie,' 'Razzle Dazzle,' 'Dim, Dim the Lights,' 'Shake, Rattle and Roll,' 'Rock Around The Clock,' etc.* (DL 8225, ED 2168, 2209, 2322)



The Lover's Touch: *Bill Snyder; Piano Solos with Orch.; 'My Melancholy Baby,' 'Don't Say Goodbye,' 'Lonely Wine' and others.* (DL 8237, ED-791)



Hi-Fi Fiddle: *Florian ZaBach, Violin Solos with Orchestra; 'The Hot Canary,' 'Jalousie,' 'Tea For Two,' 'Gypsy Fiddler,' and others.* (DL 8239, ED-792, 2154)

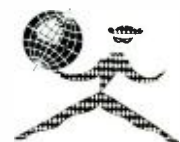
**Shorty Rogers appears courtesy Atlantic Records.
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scend the national strictures of her material. Her *Bold Fenian Aen* is a requiem for all heroes dead in hopeless causes; her *She Loves Through the Fair* (happily repeated on this release) epitomizes the bittersweet poignance of young love everywhere. The ballads she sings here are virtually all traceable to a not-too-long-removed composer; but all have been incorporated into the Irish oral tradition.

Margaret Barry is a unique artist — one of the dying breed of wandering troubadours who have preserved and disseminated so much that is significant in Western music. And this is an important record, one that deserves an attentive hearing. Along with excellent annotation, Riverside provides a booklet containing the texts of the songs.

A. L. LLOYD *Australian Bush Songs*

The Lime-Juice Tub; The Maryborough Miner; The Drover's Dream; The Banks of the Condamine; Bluey Brink; Click Go the Shears; The Wild Colonial Boy; Euabalong Ball; The Cockies of Bungaree; Brisbane Ladies; The Road to Gundagai; The Castlereagh River; The Lachlan Tigers; Bold Jack Donabue.

A. L. Lloyd; accompanied by Al Jeffrey (banjo and harmonica), Alf Edwards (concertina), and E. L. Rewald (guitar). RIVERSIDE RLP 12-606. 12-in. \$4.98.

Songs of lonely vistas, hard work, and periodic hell-raising in the slangy argot of Down Under. Practically without exception the ballad runes are of British origin, but their texts have undergone a radical sea-change in the migration to Australia.

Lloyd is a noted English folk singer who served a long stint shearing sheep in New South Wales. The result is a solid ring of authenticity in his handling of these songs. The sound is more than adequate, though one or two bands suffer from tape hiss. Lloyd himself provides the album notes; complete texts are included.

OLGA SOULINE *Russian Popular Songs*

Olga Souline. PERIOD SPL 725. 12-in. \$4.98.

While not wholly free of distortion, this is much more meticulously engineered than the average disk derived from Russian tapes. Olga Souline's voice is both rich and supple; her Russian "pops" literally burst with melody — and with folk affinities. By turns they are gay, sad, lilting, nostalgic; and Miss Souline gives each a three-dimensional life of its own. An accordion and guitar accompaniment provide her with a suitably atmospheric background. Regrettably, neither texts nor translations are furnished.

THOMAS L. THOMAS *Welsh Traditional Songs*

Thomas L. Thomas, baritone; with Enid Simon (harp) and Jacob Hanneman (piano). LONDON LL 1249. 12-in. \$3.98.

Superb London reproduction and the fine, fluent singing of Thomas L. Thomas make this an outstanding offering — particularly

in view of the surpassing beauty of the songs Thomas has chosen. In fact, the end product seriously threatens, but does not eclipse, Meredydd Evans' superlative — and probably definitive — recording of Welsh folksongs for Folkways (FP 835). Happily, the two disks overlap only in two ballads. Thomas' full-bodied interpretations therefore stand as new and very worthy additions to the catalogue. He is blessed with a skilled, atmospheric harp-piano accompaniment. No texts, no translations, but informative notes. Recommended.

TRIO LOS PARAGUAYOS *Paraguayan Folk Songs*

EPIC LN 3180. 12-in. \$3.98.

An ingratiating, brightly engineered record made in Europe, where the Trio Los Paraguayos recently scored a considerable artistic triumph on a Paraguayan government-sponsored good will tour. As represented here, their repertory of Paraguayan folk songs shows the melding of Spanish and Indian influences common to most of Latin America's indigenous music. The trio's singing is very effective; an exotic-sounding harp and guitar accompaniment underlines their effortless vocal co-ordination. In total effect, the Paraguayans — and their songs — are reminiscent of the mariachis of Mexico. No texts; no translations.

JOSH WHITE *Josh White Comes A-Visitin'*

Bury Me High; You Know, Baby; She's Too Much for Me; Bonbons, Chocolates and Chewing Gum; When the Dark Clouds Roll Away; Go Away From My Window; Come Along, Charlie; Evil Hearted Me.

PERIOD SPL 1115. 10-in. \$3.98.

Most of these selections are listed as "Josh White Originals." They seem to be a reweaving — occasionally larded with contemporary allusions — of traditional folk material. Although White is a deft remolder, somehow the "Originals" are never quite as effective as their antecedents. The singer is his usual suave self but seems to lack the intensity that distinguishes his better work. Assorted combinations of six friends and relatives provide him with choral and instrumental support, none of it very successful. Good sound.

THE MUSIC BETWEEN

VICKI BENET *Woman of Paris*

Autumn Leaves; Domino; It's So Nice to Have a Man Around the House; Hymne à l'amour; Pigalle; The Heart of Paris; C'est la vie; Tenderly; La Seine; Mon homme; Parlez moi d'amour; Mademoiselle de Paris.

Vicki Benet. DECCA DL 8233. 12-in. \$3.98.

A bilingual onslaught on a dozen songs that have found a welcome audience both in France and America. The young lady who sings them, Vicki Benet, handles their nostalgic lyrics with a big voice that smokes

with vibrato and ranges farther up and down the scale than you would think possible. This record is for those whose hearts are sturdy enough to withstand forthright appeals and robust sadness. R. K.

BETTY CARTER - RAY BRYANT

Sneaking Around; Moonlight in Vermont; What Is This Thing Called Love?; Thou Swell; Willow Weep for Me; I Could Write a Book; Threesome; Gone with the Wind; Old Devil Moon; The Way You Look Tonight; No Moon at All; Can't We Be Friends?

EPIC LN 3201. 12-in. \$3.98.

An exciting collaboration between singer Betty Carter and pianist Ray Bryant, with fill-ins from a trio. Carter and Bryant are a distinctive couple, bending melodies to their will, allowing lyrics to make their point; even though their duets sometimes threaten to become merely eccentric, they never fail to provide less than enough understanding for their material and genuine pleasure for their audience. It's almost impossible to define the exact quality of their work, which is both free-wheeling and controlled, and always original. R. K.

LES ELGART *For Dancers Only*

Les Elgart and his Orchestra. COLUMBIA CL 803. 12-in. \$3.98.

Another smooth foray into dance-floor rhythms by one of today's most accomplished practitioners. The tempos are all civilized; and just so you won't stumble, the beat is always there. R. K.

PERCY FAITH *Swing Low in Hi-Fi*

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; All God's Children Got Wings; Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child; Little David Play on Your Harp; Were You There?; It's Me, Oh Lord; Get on Board; Deep River; Every Time I Feel the Spirit; Stead Away; Roll the Old Chariot Along; Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen; Go Down Moses; Ezekiel Saw the Wheel.

Percy Faith and his Orchestra. COLUMBIA CL 796. 12-in. \$3.98.

The charm of most spirituals is in their simplicity and here are a full fourteen of them, all dolled-up in gaudy but skillful arrangements, in which every instrument — at one time or another — has its chance to set off musical fireworks. Fine for hi-fi listening but pretty tough on the spirituals. R. K.

CONLEY GRAVES TRIO *Genius at Work*

The Man I Love; Laura; Slaughter on Tenth Avenue; Prelude II — Fugue; Stella by Starlight; Love for Sale; Flamingo; Malagueña; Humoresque; St. Louis Blues; Walk It Off.

DECCA DL 8220. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Conley Graves trio consists of piano, drums, and bass, with Mr. Graves himself at the keyboard, and working hard too. His style is eclectic, romping with aplomb through cocktail-lounge exercises, a Bach fugue that swings easily, and some tricky variations on pop tunes. Fortunately, Mr. Graves and his rhythm background are rarely in trouble, and the cascades of sound

he produces on his piano are frequently gay and bright. R. K.

GUCKENHEIMER BAND
Oom-Pah-Pah in Hi Fi

Trink mir noch 3 Tropfen; Gaudeamus; Die Wacht am Rhein; Lanterbach; Rain Rain Polka; Present Arms; Hi-Le-Hi-Lo; Schub-plattler Tanz; Under the Double Eagle; Villi; Blue Danube; Village Tavern Polka; Kommt ein Vogel geflogen; Bier Her, Bier Her; Alt Kameraden March.

The Guckenheimer Sour Kraut Band.
SAN FRANCISCO M 33005. 12-in. \$4.98.

A delicious serving of Teutonic marches, polkas, folk songs, and waltzes, in which some deliberately strangled dissonances blast the air from time to time. It's all been done on purpose, and the beautifully pitched sour notes that enhance all the melodies here can do nothing but spread joy and tickle the listener's eardrums. A little tickling, of course, goes a long way, but on LP you can take your repertoire in doses as small as you like. Suggested dose here: two bands a sitting. R. K.

JOE LILLEY
Alone Together

April in Paris; Autumn in New York; Alone Together; Dancing in the Dark; In the Still of the Night; Where or When; My Heart Stood Still; You Were Meant for Me; Easy to Love; I'm Through with Love; These Foolish Things (Remind Me of You); There's a Small Hotel.

Joe Lilley, his choir, and the Skylarks.
DECCA DL 8223. 12-in. \$3.98.

Standard tunes in extremely pleasant arrangements by Joseph Lilley, musical director of Paramount Pictures. A choir, a quintet, and various instrumentalists give the arrangements all they have, and the performances more than match the music in taste and general attractiveness. R. K.

SUZY SOLIDOR
Il était un trois-mâts

Horizon chimérique; A quoi songes-tu; Il était un trois-mâts; Le marin d'eau douce; Si Ton gardait; La fiancée du pirate; La brème; J'aime être avec toi; Le bateau espagnol; Amsterdam; Le marin et la rose; La mariée salée; Au revoir, belle fille; Le bateau en bouteille; Chant ma belle.

Suzy Solidor; orchestra. Freddy Balta, cond.
LONDON WB 91098. 10-in. \$2.98.

A lovely, quiet, unusual record; I was tempted to say "of its kind," when I realized that it is probably unique. Certainly I know of no other recording comparable to it. Upon it has been lavished not only affection, but also something much rarer: real imagination. In a low, throaty, svelte voice Suzy Solidor sings or recites the joys, the sorrows, the heartaches, and the loves of those who follow the sea, be they sailors or the women who wait for them. Calmly and sweetly she sings, coolly and gently she recites, quietly and softly she creates little cameos that breathe and have life. This is not merely another French *chanson* at work but an artist of deep understanding and feeling, portraying the ebb and flow of the sea and its effect on its followers. Don't worry if your French is a trifle rusty: Miss

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	Turnover	Rolloff	Record No. or Date: Turnover, Rolloff
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Bethlehem	500R	13.7	
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Boston	500C	16	
*Caedmon	500R	13.7	No. 1001-1022: 630, 16
Canyon	500R	13.7	To No. C6160: 400, 12
Capitol	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Capitol-Cetra	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Cetra-Soria	500C	16	
Classic Editions	500R	13.7	
Colosseum	500R	13.7	To January 1954: 500, 16
*Columbia	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16.
Concert Hall	500R	10.5	To 1954: 500C, 16.
*Contemporary	500R	13.7	No. 3501, 2501, 2502, 2505, 2507, 2001, 2002: 400, 12. No. 2504: 500, 16
†Cook (SOOT)	500	12-15	
Coral	500	16	
Decca	500R	13.7	To November 1955: 500, 16
Elektra	500R	13.7	No. 2-15, 18-20, 24-26: 630, 16. No. 17, 22: 400, 12. No. 16, 21, 23, 24: 500R, 13.7
EMS	500R	13.7	
Epic	500R	13.7	
Esoteric	500R	13.7	No. ES 500, 517, EST 5, 6: 400, 12
Folkways	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16
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Haydn Society	500C	16	
HMV	500R	16	
Kapp	500R	13.7	No. 100-103, 1000-1001: 800, 16
Kendall	500	16	
*London, Lon. Int.	500R	13.7	To No. 846: 500C, 10.5
Lyricord	500	16	
McIntosh	500R	13.7	
*Mercury	500R	13.7	To October 1954: 400, 12
MGM	500R	13.7	
Montilla	500R	13.7	
New Jazz	500R	13.7	
Nocturne	500R	13.7	No. LP 1-3, 5, XP1-10: 400, 12
Oceanic	500C	16	
*L'Oiseau-Lyre	500R	13.7	To 1954: 500C, 10.5
*Overtone	500R	13.7	No. 1-3: 500, 16
Oxford	500C	16	
Pacific Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1-13: 400, 12
Philharmonia	400	12	
†Polymusic	500	16	
Prestige	500R	13.7	
RCA Victor	500R	13.7	To September 1952: 500 or 800, 12
Remington	500	16	
Riverside	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Romany	500R	13.7	
Savoy	500R	13.7	
Tempo	500	16	
Transradio	500C	16	
Urania	500R	13.7	No. 7059, 224, 7066, 7063, 7065, 603, 7069: 400, 12. Others: 500C, 16
Vanguard	500R	13.7	No. 411-442, 6000-6018, 7001-7011, 8001- 8004: 500, 16
Vox	500R	13.7	500, 16 unless otherwise specified.
Walden	500R	13.7	
*Westminster	500R	13.7	To October 1955: 500C, 16; or if AES speci- fied: 400, 12

*Currently re-recording old masters for RIAA curve.
†Binaural records produced on this label have no treble boost on the inside band, which should be played without any rolloff.

Solidor's diction will help you understand, quite easily, the import of her songs. And in a recording so devoted to the sea, it is refreshing to find that nobody found it necessary, at any time, to overwhelm us with portions of Trenet's *La Mer*. J. F. I.

MAXINE SULLIVAN *Maxine Sullivan — 1956*

Loch Lomond; Turtle Dove; Oh, No John; A Brown Bird Singing; Barbara Allen; Wrangle Taggle Gypsies; Jackie Boy; I'm Coming Virginia; I Didn't Know About You; St. Louis Blues; The Folks Who Live on the Hill; Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life: When Your Lover Has Gone.

PERIOD RI 1909. 12-in. \$4.98.

Maxine Sullivan '56 is Maxine Sullivan '41, for no changes have taken place. Still very much in evidence are the light, effortless style (as though it were coming right off the top of the singer's head) and a repertoire of slightly hopped-up folk songs that is as disarming as it ever was. A welcome return to records. R. K.

NANCY WALKER

I Can Cook Too; Some Other Time; I'm Tired of Texas; Get Married, Shirley; Down to the Sea; Irving; Milkman, Keep Those Bottles Quiet; Oh, So Nice; The Charade of the Marionettes; A Funny Heart; My Cousin in Milwaukee.

Nancy Walker; David Baker, piano.
DOLPHIN 2. 12-in. \$4.98.

Best Foot Forward, a wartime musical that had a fine score by Ralph Blane (which, incidentally, someone should record in its entirety), also introduced to Broadway one of its funniest new comedienne, Nancy Walker. A cross between Fannie Brice and Martha Raye (only louder, if that's possible), Miss Walker is a real hoyden, a comedienne of remarkable — if limited — range, and a solid singer of off-beat numbers. Here is a pretty generous sampling of her talent, and most of it is off the top shelf. Give her something to shout about, as in the title song or that celebrated request to the milkman, and she is immense. She is no slouch either when it comes to the sardonic overtones of *Get Married, Shirley* or the impish hymn to the physical attributes of Irving. But when she wants — as many comics do — to be tragic, she comes something of a cropper. Fortunately, only two songs fall in this category; and since both are quite short, there is no need to be scared — the remainder of her program is nothing but sheer enjoyment. J. F. I.

THE SPOKEN WORD

W. R. RODGERS

Europa and the Bull and other poems, read by the poet W. R. Rodgers.
WESTMINSTER 18151. 12-in. \$4.98 (or \$3.98.)

Europa and the Bull is a long (one and a half sides of the disk), philosophical

(the poet takes his point of departure from Canto I of Dante's *Inferno*) poem which retells Moschus' idyll of the beautiful Phoenician maiden who arouses the lust of Zeus and is seduced by him in the guise of a bull. The bull here apparently represents "man, the amalgam" suffering from the "deep duplicity of flesh and spirit," "lov[ing] to have but fear[ing] to hold" Absolute Beauty, the Ideal — or whatever other noble abstraction one chooses to set up. In W. R. Rodgers' version of the myth the usual dichotomy is resolved as one of "fructifying friction," and the poem concludes with a kind of hymeneal: ". . . may the nodding moth of myth in every mouth take breath and wing now and dance these words out in honor of that wedding."

At least on first hearing this record, the listener is advised not to struggle for the "meaning." In Mr. Rodgers' reading, the poem creates a hypnotic, trancelike state (in part owing to the perhaps excessive use of alliterative verse, of rhyme, and of iambic rhythms) as a positive torrent of verbal imagery pours forth in lavish profusion — and one can derive a good deal of pleasure from this drowning of the senses in language of a richly sensuous kind. — The short poems with which the reading concludes make more explicit the suspicion that Mr. Rodgers has possibly gone to school to Joyce and is amusing himself, as well as his audience, with verbal legerdemain. J.G.

KEATS AND SHELLEY

Selections from the poems of John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley, read by Theodore Marcuse.
LEXINGTON 7505. 12-in. \$5.95.

Perhaps no poetry lends itself more readily to cheap and easy satire than that of Keats and Shelley; and the reading of their verse on this recording will, unhappily, do nothing to correct this situation. If you really want to indulge in an emotional orgy — to "fall upon the thorns of life [and] bleed" or to "shriek and clasp [your] hands in ecstasy" — this disk will afford you full opportunity; otherwise, you may very well be reduced to unbecoming fits of laughter. And surely a reading which provokes either response is unfair to poetry which has considerable sensuous beauty and, in the case of Shelley, anyway, some pretension — however jejune — to intellectual and ethical implications.

For the most part, Mr. Marcuse declaims these poems in the manner usually described as "fraught with emotion." Vehemently, passionately, his voice occasionally choked by the sob (quite audible) of anguish, he expresses the cry, "the fever and the fit," of a soul tormented by the recognition of the transience and mutability of all things. Admittedly, the *Ode to a Nightingale* is a song of death and a song of despair. But it is also a "plaintive anthem" (italics mine) and, with most of Keats's poetry, it combines the qualities of lyrical reflectiveness and poignancy. It is this pensive melancholy which one misses in Mr. Marcuse's exclamatory, denunciatory, sometimes even savage notes.

Shelley probably was more of a spirit "tameless, and swift, and proud" than his younger contemporary; but even Promethean

rebel as he may have liked to be considered, he is addressing himself, in the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, for instance, primarily to an abstract idea of the true and the beautiful. For him, pleasure was heightened by the consciousness of pain; but again, as with Keats, the pain is a sober and meditative one. In his own view, Shelley was a philosophic poet, and not even the *Ode to the West Wind* needs to be shrieked with all the stops out. In brief, Mr. Marcuse's interpretations seem to me far too violent for verse which is in the main sad, somber, and somewhat emasculate. I would very much like to hear Mr. Marcuse read some Byron.

As for the selections here, they are the usual choices found in any short an-

thology of English Romantic poetry. The single surprise is *Song About Myself* ("There was a naughty boy"), the doggerel which Keats composed in a letter for the amusement of his sister Fanny and which I for one could do without. Shelley's *Adonais*, the lovely threnody for Keats, is missing. Perhaps it was too lengthy for inclusion, but still its omission is regrettable, both by reason of its intrinsic merits and the lost opportunity for a romantic gesture, which this disk initially makes by coupling Keats and Shelley. To direct one's comments to the manufacturer further, one might add that an organization which calls itself Educational Audio Visual, Inc., ought to pay more attention to its spelling than the notes on this jacket indicate it does. J. G.



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N. Y. Herald Tribune
March 11, 1956

By JOHN D. MOLLESON

Though it has a Soho background and characters with English names, Kurt Weill's "The Three-Penny Opera" is an acid portrait that describes and had its origin in the disillusioned and defeated Germany of the 1920s. When sung in German, as it is in an excellent new Vanguard release (\$4.98), the opera has the power to recreate and distill a shabby and slightly ominous decade.

The performance is conducted by P. Charles Adler, an old hand with this music, who has the advantage of a fine cast of singing actors, among them the dusky-voiced Liane as Polly Peachum, whose songs have a distinctly German blend of Freud and torch. Others in the Viennese cast are Helge Roswaenge, Kurt Preger and Hedy Fasser, accompanied by the chamber orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, and splendidly recorded.

Comparison of Polly Peachum's songs with English recorded versions and with a French disk by Juliette Greco demonstrates strongly the uniqueness of opera in German. Translating it loses as much of the flavor as would a German version of "Foggy and Bess." This cast seems to have lived with the inimitable words for some time and the singers present them with a splendid feeling for their mockery and b.t.e.

Deliberately and ingeniously tawdry in most of its tunes, the opera would appear to offer little promise as a permanent vessel to hold the essence of an era. With its shreds of tango and continental jazz, and its atmosphere of a run-down rathskeller, it is not an especially lovely period piece. But the craftsmanship of its authors captures a mood and state of mind so perfectly that an authentic performance, such as this one, gives the opera the aspect of a classic.

Vanguard Recording Society, Inc., 256 West 55th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

COUNT BASIE

Count Basie Swings, Joe Williams Sings Every Day: The Comeback: All Right. Okay, You Win: In the Evening: Roll 'Em Pete: Teach Me Tonight: My Baby Upsets Me: Please Send Me Someone to Love: Er'ry Day.

CLEF MG C-678. 12-in. 35 min. \$3.98.

Count Basie's new blues singer, Joe Williams, makes his LP debut on this disk and, by and large, it is a memorable in-

roduction. Williams is an up-to-date descendant of the main tradition of blues singing—a big-voiced bellow in the manner of Joe Turner with more varied ways of attacking the blues than his predecessors usually had. He shouts them, he talks them, and he croons them, sometimes introducing elements of sophistication which seem a little at odds with the basic nature of his material. *Every Day* (not to be confused with another selection on this same disk, *Er'ry Day*) has been his big popular hit, but it is one of the least interesting of these performances. It's on numbers such as *In the Evening*, *My Baby Upsets Me*, and the old Joe Turner-Pete Johnson favorite, *Roll 'Em Pete*, that both Williams and the Basie band achieve a fascinating blend of the basic

guttness requisite for a proper blues and a subtlety and delicacy that are, strangely, quite in character. Basie's band, which has been wretchedly recorded by Clef in the past, is given a fair aural shake this time.

FRENCH TOAST

Nice Joke: Saxology—Christian Chevallier and his Orchestra. *Fiction: Quartet Mind*—Christian Chevallier and His Quartet. *Little Story: Halbe Fünf: Two Cats and a Piece of Lung*—Andre Persiany and His Orchestra. *Christmas Song*—Guy Lafitte and His Orchestra.

ANGEL 60009. 10-in. 22 min. \$2.98.

The style of the French groups on this disk is basically middle-period swing with some modern overtones. They have obviously benefited from association with the American jazzmen who move in and out of Paris. Fats Sadi, the Belgian vibist, is heard to excellent advantage with Chevallier's Quartet on *Fiction*. Low Reed, a saxophonist best known for his work on baritone, proves to be even better on alto with Persiany's band in *Little Story*, while Benny Vasseur, a versatile and big-voiced trombonist, dominates *Halbe Fünf*. The writing for the big-band selections is rather soggy (*Saxology* is a crisp exception) but as long as the soloists have the floor all the numbers move.

GENE KRUPA-LIONEL HAMPTON- TEDDY WILSON

The Benny Goodman Movie

Avolon: I Got Rhythm: Moon Glow: Blues for Benny: Just You, Just Me: Airmail Special.

Lionel Hampton, vibes; Teddy Wilson, piano; Red Callender, bass; Gene Krupa, drums.

CLEF MG C-681. 12-in. 44 min. \$3.98.

One more disk inspired by the Benny Goodman film and, in its way, one of the best. This is the Benny Goodman Quartet without Goodman, an arrangement that is not quite as pitiless as one might suspect. The vacuum created by Goodman's absence is easily filled by Lionel Hampton, and in consequence the group smacks much of Hampton and only very slightly of Goodman. This is the sort of set-up in which Hampton is usually at his best and he is true to form here, playing with beauty, skill, and drive. Wilson is overshadowed by Hampton these days but he contributes several lucid solos and Krupa's drumming is much more sensitive than we have become accustomed to expect. Essentially, this is a Hampton record and a very good one.

THE MUNDELL LOWE QUARTET

Will You Still Be Mine?: I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plans: I'll Never Be the Same: All of you: Yes, Sir, That's My Baby: The Night We Called It a Day: Bach Revisited: Cheek to Cheek: Far from Vanilla.

Mundell Lowe, guitar; Dick Hyman, piano, organ, celeste; Trigger Alpert, bass; Ed Shaughnessy, drums.

RIVERSIDE 12-204. 12-in. 36 min. \$4.98.

Sparkling and imaginative forays by one of the most craftsmanlike of modern guitarists, abetted by a polished rhythm section. Lowe's playing is spare, clean, to the



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What... another youthful prodigy? That must have been the thought in many critical minds when Edouard van Remoortel first appeared as a conductor at the age of 17 in Geneva. After his performance, the critics were more mindful of his power and control than of his youth. Certainly, it was not because of his youth that van Remoortel was chosen at Salzburg to direct the orchestra of the Mozarteum on the 160th Anniversary of Mozart's death. In 1952, 1953 and 1954, he conducted at the famous Nice Festival and the Belgian Summer Festival at Ostend. In 1955 he conducted the Pro-Casals Festival in Mexico. He has conducted the famed Zagreb Chamber Orchestra.

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point, and delightfully adventurous (from the merriment of *Yes, Sir, That's My Baby* and the baroque whimsy of *Back Revisited* on one hand, to the modernism *in extremis* of *Far from Vanilla* on the other). Equally provocative is Dick Hyman's demonstration that he can be counted, along with Fats Waller and Count Basie, among the very few musicians who can coax light, swinging sounds from an organ.

SELDON POWELL

Go First Class; Why Was I Born; Love Is Just Around the Corner; Someone to Watch Over Me; Count Fleet; Autumn Nocturne; Swingsville, Ohio; Summertime.

Jimmy Nottingham, trumpet; Bob Alexander, trombone; Seldon Powell, tenor saxophone; Tony Aless, piano; Billy Bauer, guitar; Arnold Fishkin, bass; Don Lamond, drums.

ROOST 2205. 12-in. 33 min. \$3.98.

Powell is a recently arrived tenor saxophonist with a hard tone and a strong attack, both of which bring a good measure of vitality back to an instrument that has been leaning more and more toward the nabby-pabby. On first hearing, his tone may seem unpleasantly harsh; but it is so perfectly suited to his style, and that style has so much vigour and grace, that this sense of harshness soon disappears. He moves easily and creatively at fast tempos, while his ballads have a cool elegance, never descending to sentimentality or turning overripe. His playing throughout the disk is well disciplined and he gets sound support from his rhythm section and trombonist Bob Alexander.

CY TOUFF

His Octet and Quintet

Keester Parade; TNT; What Am I Here For?; Groover Wailin'.

Cy Touff, bass trumpet; Harry Edison, Conrad Gozzo, trumpets; Richie Kamuca, tenor saxophone; Matt Ural, alto and baritone saxophones; Russ Freeman, piano; Leroy Vinegar, bass; Chuck Flores, drums.

Prez-ence; Half Past Jumping Time; A Smooth One; Primitive Cats.

Touff; Kamuca; Vinegar; Flores; and Pete Jolly, piano.

PACIFIC JAZZ 1211. 12-in. 43 min. \$3.98.

Cy Touff is the first jazz musician who has had the audacity to tie his career to the bass trumpet. They—Touff and trumpet—have done very well together. After several years as one of the more forceful factors in Woody Herman's band, Touff emerges on this disk as a leader of his own groups for the first time. The easy, ingratiating swing style that is characteristic of Touff's playing is caught by both the octet and the quintet. There are occasional routine moments when the larger group is playing *en masse*, but Touff, Richie Kamuca, and Harry Edison are to the fore most of the time riding brightly over excellent rhythm support. The quintet's playing is pleasantly relaxed with Pete Jolly joining Touff and Kamuca in aptly conceived solos. It is all top-notch, swinging jazz, played with consistent, knowing skill.

LENNIE TRISTANO

Requiem; Turkish Mambo—Lennie Tristano, piano. *Line Up: East Thirty-Second*—Tristano; Peter Ind, bass; Jeff Morton, drums. *These Foolish Things; You Go to My Head; If I Had You; Ghost of a Chance; All the Things You Are*—Tristano; Lee Konitz, alto saxophone; Gene Ramey, bass; Art Taylor, drums.

ATLANTIC 1224. 12-in. 46 min. \$3.98.

An influential jazz figure for the past decade, Tristano has done comparatively little recording in recent years. This striking disk is significant not only because it marks his return to recording but because it also serves as a refutation to the widely held idea that his playing is obscure or

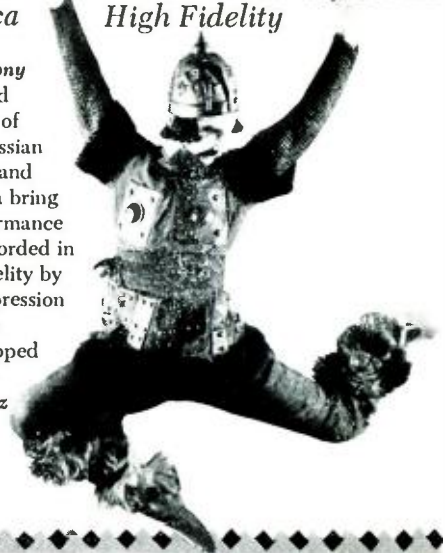
difficult to appreciate. Complexities and gimmicks are on hand aplenty; but for one who is more interested in listening than in dissecting, the music is absorbing and compelling, with strong fresh rhythmic and melodic accents. The fact that *Line Up*, *Turkish Mambo*, and *East Thirty-Second* involve tape manipulations is of little importance beside the fact that what Tristano has contrived with his piano and tapes is fascinating and stimulating piano jazz. On the selections with Konitz, recorded at a night club performance, he is tuneful and moving; his strong, firm statements are in sharp contrast to the saxophonist's leaning toward limp meandering. Tristano plays with easy authority throughout the disk but on his solo numbers he is nothing short of brilliant.

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HIGH FIDELITY DISCOGRAPHY NO. 25

BACH *The Chamber and Orchestral Music*

by Nathan Broder

BACH did not essay any category of composition that he did not enrich. In the great choral works he attained sublimity; in some of the organ works he engaged in intimate and ecstatic prayer; the clavier works include music written for educational purposes but raised to the level of high art. The chamber and orchestral works are social music, written for the enjoyment of the players and their guests, of Bach's princely employer at Cothen or another noble music-lover, of the members of the Collegium Musicum at Leipzig. Yet to please these people was for Bach a task hardly less exalted than the service of the Lord and of the young. For the creation of music, for whatever purpose, was to him a sacred privilege and duty, without which life was inconceivable. And for these occasional pieces he drew without stint from the bottomless well of his resources of melody and harmony and counterpoint, constantly experimenting with form and design and texture.

In the bewildering variety of works that he produced in this field we find such extremes as a grand and noble fugue for a single violin and a gay little dance for about as large an orchestra as Bach ever dealt with. And between these extremes are such masterpieces as the lovely sonatas for violin and harpsichord and flute and harpsichord, the impassioned and dramatic concertos for one or more violins or harpsichords with orchestra, and the healthy, robust, yet finely drawn *Brandenburg* Concertos. At the end of his life come the two works—the *Musical Offering* and the *Art of the Fugue*—that sum up the accumulated gains of centuries of contrapuntal writing. But the *Art of the Fugue*, especially, is music so moving that technical considerations recede into the background, and the blind old Master stands revealed once more as a tremendous creative force.

The works are listed here in the order in which they

appear in Wolfgang Schmieder's thematic catalogue, the *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis*. This is not a chronological catalogue, like the *Kochel* of Mozart or the *Deutsch* of Schubert. Instead the works are first divided into categories and then numbered continuously from 1 to 1080. Thus the category of Chamber Music comprises Nos. 1001 to 1040. The Schmieder has unfortunately come to be abbreviated "BWV," instead of the more sensible (and internationally understandable) "S." In this discography I shall deal with the following categories: Lute Works, Chamber Music, Concertos, Suites, and the *Musical Offering* and *Art of the Fugue*. Keyboard works will be treated in a third, and final, Bach discography.

As in the discography of Bach's choral works [HIGH FIDELITY, September 1955], I shall make no attempt to discuss the proper interpretation of the ornaments. The cases where modern instruments are used instead of those specified by Bach (e.g., flute instead of recorder) are noted. The quality of the recording may be assumed to be adequate or better unless something is said to the contrary. No account is taken here of individual movements or of the numerous transcriptions of some of these. The order of the listing at the end of each item is intended to reflect the order of merit in the opinion of the reviewer. Listings in brackets indicate recordings that were not available to the writer.

I should like to take this opportunity to correct two errors that have turned up in the discography of the choral works. In Cantata No. 65 (Lyrichord LL 50) the horns are played in the proper register, not an octave too low. The solo singers and instrumentalists in Cantatas Nos. 41, 42, and 60 (RCA Victor LM 6023) are all members of the Bach Aria Group, William Scheide, director; and it is this group, not the Robert Shaw Chorale, that is responsible for the arias in the same album.

LUTE WORKS

SUITE IN G MINOR, BWV 995; SUITE IN E MINOR, BWV 996; PRELUDE AND FUGUE IN E-FLAT, BWV 998 (1 Edition)

Whether Bach could play the lute himself and wrote all of these pieces for it (as well as some others that are attributed to him) has been the subject of some discussion in the Bach literature. It has been pointed out that Bach owned a lute and had an expert lutanist among his pupils; and lute players say that these works lie well for their instrument and were written by someone familiar with its technique. The G minor Suite is a transcription of the Suite No. 5 for unaccompanied cello, and the Prelude and Fugue lack the final Allegro that follows them in the Complete Edition. Neither the music nor its performance, it seems to me, lifts this disk

out of its special status as an item principally for Bach specialists and lute enthusiasts.

—Michel Podolski, lute. 12-in PERIOD SPL 724. \$4.98.

SUITE IN C MINOR, BWV 997 (1 Edition)

An attractive work, with an expressive Prelude and a Sarabande that begins like the last movement of the St. Matthew Passion. Schmieder lists it among the lute compositions; there is pretty general agreement that it is not a clavier work, which is the way it was published in the Complete Edition. There seems to be no good reason for objecting to the present arrangement, made by Veyron-Lacroix for flute and harpsichord. The bass is tastefully "realized" and the work is nicely played.

—Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute; Robert Vey-

ron-Lacroix, harpsichord. 12-in. HAYDN HSL 80 (with Vivaldi: Concerto for Flute, Oboe, Violin, Bassoon, and Figured Bass, in G minor; Sonata for Flute and Figured Bass, in D minor). \$5.95.

PRELUDE IN C MINOR, BWV 999; FUGUE IN G MINOR, BWV 1000 (1 Edition)

The Prelude is one of Bach's atmospheric little pieces and the Fugue is a transcription for lute of the second movement of the G minor Sonata for unaccompanied violin. Segovia plays them with his customary musicality. His virtuosity in the Fugue is remarkable. Also included on these disks are two movements from the Lute Suite in E minor, BWV 996.

—Andrés Segovia, guitar. 10-in. M-G-M E 123 (with four other pieces and transcriptions). \$2.98. Also 12-in. M-G-M E 3015 (with same pieces and three preludes and fugues for organ). \$3.98.

CHAMBER MUSIC

SONATAS AND PARTITAS FOR UNACCOMPANIED VIOLIN, BWV 1001-1006, COMPLETE (4 Editions)

These six compositions are one of the glories of the violin literature and the despair of countless violinists. To play them properly requires deep insight into a type of musical structure that does not yield its secrets easily, a lively but controlled temperament, and a technique that overcomes all obstacles. The combination of these qualities in a single player is, obviously, rare; and none of the performances dealt with here is so convincing as to compel one to exclaim, "This is it!" Nevertheless all of them have value or interest for one reason or another, and some of the readings of single works are as good as we are likely to get in a world where fiddlers are only human.

The three sonatas each consist of four movements in the pattern slow-fugue-slow-fast. In each case the second slow movement is in a key different from but related to that of the other sections of the work. The partitas contain five or more movements, almost all being in the idealized dance forms of the time. Here the same key is maintained throughout each work. In other words, the sonatas correspond to the "church sonatas" of the Italian Baroque, while the partitas correspond to the "chamber sonatas."

Some years ago there arose a movement advocating the return to a curved bow in playing these works. It was claimed that the chords in these compositions were meant to be played solid, not arpeggiated as they must be if a modern bow and bridge are used. There is strong evidence to contradict this view, but that did not deter members of the movement from experimenting with curved bows and flatter bridges. The Schroeder set represents the results of one such experiment. It is not, it seems to me, a success. The tone is thin, spread, and wiry; despite the curved bow, some of the multiple stops sound awkward and coarse; and the musical interpretation is not exactly inspired. Another experiment—this one more successful—is offered in the Telmányi set. His bow, while curved, is fitted with a new gadget which enables him to control the tension of the hairs at will. His tone is much pleasanter than Schroeder's, and the chords sound rich and sonorous. The playing in general, however—probably owing to the relative unfamiliarity of the bow—is not very lively. Moreover, it makes everything sound too easy; the vicarious thrills we get in following a performance on the modern instrument are diluted.

Such thrills are present in abundance in the Heifetz set. While we may not agree with a tempo here and there and while other reservations are expressed below in the discussion of the individual works, this set is by and large the best of the complete Sonatas and Partitas obtainable at present. The Martzy is distinguished for superior beauty of tone and clarity of recording, but, as will be seen, is not so strong musically.

—Jascha Heifetz, violin. Three 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 6105. \$11.94.
—Johanna Martzy, violin. Three 12-in. ANGEL 35280/82. \$14.94.

—Emil Telmányi, using the "Vega" Bach Bow. Three 12-in. LONDON LLA 20. \$11.94.

—Ralph Schroeder, using a curved bow. Three 12-in. COLUMBIA SL 189. \$11.94.

SONATA NO. 1, IN G MINOR, BWV 1001 (9 Editions)

From the standpoint of sheer violin-playing, every one of the first seven recordings listed below has a good deal to be said for it. None of them, however, reveals any great depth of insight into the structure of the music. All in all, Heifetz and Milstein seem to come off best, with Olevsky next. Martzy has a lovely tone but could do with more bravura in the Fugue and more rhythmic vitality in the Siciliano. Renarly's instrument (or recording?) sounds a little wiry, and he alters the text in one measure of the Fugue. Oistrakh, son of the celebrated David, plays quite acceptably on the whole, but the reproduction here is not as lifelike as in the other disks.

—Heifetz, in RCA VICTOR LM 6105.

—Nathan Milstein, violin. 12-in. CAPITOL P 8298 (with Partita No. 2). \$3.98.

—Julian Olevsky, violin. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WL 5306 (with Partita No. 2). \$2.99.

—Ossy Renardy, violin. 10-in. LONDON LPS 423. \$2.98.

—Marty, on ANGEL 35280.

—Igor Oistrakh, violin. 12-in. COLOSSEUM CRLP 193 (with Sonata No. 5, in F minor, for violin and piano; Vitali: Chaconne). \$3.98.

—Telmányi, in LONDON LLA 20.

—Schroeder, in COLUMBIA SL 189.

SONATA NO. 2, IN A MINOR, BWV 1003 (5 Editions)

Both the Olevsky and Martzy performances are respectable though not exciting. While Olevsky's *Grave* has a moving quality, neither he nor the dulcet-toned Miss Martzy has the technical aplomb of Heifetz or the bravura with which that wizard sweeps through the fast movements.

—Heifetz, in RCA VICTOR LM 6105.

—Julian Olevsky, violin. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WN 18072 (with Partita No. 3). \$4.98.

—Marty, on ANGEL 35281.

—Telmányi, in LONDON LLA 20.

—Schroeder, in COLUMBIA SL 189.

PARTITA NO. 2, IN D MINOR, BWV 1004 (7 Editions)



Heifetz

The crown of this work, and indeed of the whole set, is of course the giant Chaconne, which has been subjected to all kinds of mayhem in the form of transcriptions for anything from a guitar to a symphony orchestra. Here all of our violinists put their best foot forward, and it is even more difficult than usual to choose among them. The order of the listing below should not be taken too seriously. The greatest intensity is to be found in Heifetz and Francescatti. Milstein's performance, while somewhat more detached, is also first-rate; and Olevsky and Martzy are close behind. Francescatti makes his points a little more obviously than the others. Heifetz, Francescatti, and Milstein all indulge in a bit of rhythmic shenanigans—Heifetz and Milstein in the third variation from the end, and Heifetz and Francescatti in the next variation. The others all stick to the score, as do these men everywhere else.

—Heifetz, in RCA VICTOR LM 6105.

—Nathan Milstein, violin. 12-in. CAPITOL P 8298 (with Sonata No. 1). \$3.98.

—Zino Francescatti, violin. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4935 (with Partita No. 3). \$3.98.

—Marty, on ANGEL 35281.

—Julian Olevsky, violin. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WL 5306 (with Sonata No. 1). \$2.99.

—Telmányi, in LONDON LLA 20.

—Schroeder, in COLUMBIA SL 189.

SONATA NO. 3, IN C, BWV 1005 (5 Editions)

Heifetz here, too, though both the Martzy and Renardy are almost as distinguished.

—Heifetz, in RCA VICTOR LM 6105.

—Marty, on ANGEL 35282.

—Ossy Renardy, violin. 10-in. LONDON LPS 259. \$2.98.

—Telmányi, in LONDON LLA 20.

—Schroeder, in COLUMBIA SL 189.

PARTITA NO. 3, IN E, BWV 1006 (6 Editions)

A toss-up among the first four listed below. Martzy has the most appealing tone. Sound first-rate in Columbia, Westminster, and Angel, with the Victor only a step below.

—Julian Olevsky, violin. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WN 18072 (with Sonata No. 2). \$4.98.

—Zino Francescatti, violin. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4935 (with Partita No. 2). \$3.98.

—Marty, on ANGEL 35282.

—Heifetz, in RCA VICTOR LM 6105.

—Telmányi, in LONDON LLA 20.

—Schroeder, in COLUMBIA SL 189.

SUITES FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1007-1012, COMPLETE (1 Edition)

These suites are not, in my opinion, among Bach's great works. Aside from one or two movements that have achieved a measure of popularity (but in piano arrangements), they offer little to delight the ear or stir the viscera. For the cellist's practice-room and the scholar's study they are of course important, but for sheer listening pleasure they seem to me among the least enjoyable of Bach's works. This, I gather, is not an opinion that is shared by Janigro. He lavishes upon these dry and elephantine compositions the resources of an excellent technique and

a good tone. In some of the Preludes he even manages to achieve some eloquence. The recording is so clear that one occasionally hears the cellist's breathing. In the second and sixth suites (WL 5348) no visible bands separate the movements; and in the reviewer's copy there is a defective groove in the Allemande of No. 6. —Antonio Janigro, cello. Three 12-in. WESTMINSTER WL 5217, WL 5348, WN 18073. \$2.99, \$2.99, and \$4.98.

SUITES NOS. 2, 4, 5, AND 6 FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1008, 1010-1012 (1 Edition)

Here the suites are played skillfully and with a beautiful tone on the viola. Miss Fuchs makes rather free with the rhythm in some of the movements, but one can hardly blame her for attempting to avoid a metronomic beat and to lend interest to the phrasing.

—Lillian Fuchs, viola. Two 12-in. DECCA DL 9544, 9660. \$3.98 each.

SUITE NO. 1, IN G, BWV 1007 (2 Editions)

—Janigro, on WESTMINSTER WL 5217. [—Janos Starker, cello. 12-in. PERIOD 582 (with Suite No. 4). \$4.98.]

SUITE NO. 2, IN D MINOR, BWV 1008 (3 Editions)

If these suites must be played in public, then Casals' is the way to play them. His penetrating musicianship and infectious verve are combined here in a performance that is a model in every respect but one—his rather cavalier treatment of the letter of the text. In one measure of the Praeludium he changes the notes; in the Allemande he adds some as bass; in the Sarabande he omits one. No doubt he has thought long and hard about these things in a lifetime of study, but knowing his reverence for Bach one finds such changes puzzling. The recording is old but still acceptable.

—Pablo Casals, cello. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LCT 1104 (with Suite No. 3). \$3.98. —Janigro, on WESTMINSTER WL 5348. —Fuchs, on DECCA DL 9544.

SUITE NO. 3, IN C, BWV 1009 (4 Editions)

Mainardi turns in a clean, straightforward job, but even though he is favored with better recording than Casals, he is no match for his illustrious competitor. Both players take a few liberties with the text in the Gigue, Mainardi's being even less excusable than Casals'.

—Pablo Casals, cello. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LCT 1104 (with Suite No. 2). \$3.98. —Janigro, on WESTMINSTER WL 5217. —Enrico Mainardi, cello. 10-in. LONDON LPS 403. \$2.98. [—Janos Starker, cello. 12-in. PERIOD 543 (with Suite No. 6). \$4.98.]

SUITE NO. 4, IN E-FLAT, BWV 1010 (4 Editions)

A particularly dreary Praeludium and a relatively gay Bourrée are features of this Suite, which is well enough played by Mainardi. One wonders why it should take both sides of a twelve-inch disk when Janigro, with not very different tempos, gets it onto one side.

—Janigro, on WESTMINSTER WN 18073.

—Enrico Mainardi, cello. 12-in. LONDON LLP 404. \$3.98.

—Fuchs, on DECCA DL 9660.

[—Janos Starker, cello. 12-in. PERIOD 582 (with Suite No. 1). \$4.98.]

SUITE NO. 5, IN C MINOR, BWV 1011 (2 Editions)

—Janigro, on WESTMINSTER WN 18073. —Fuchs, on DECCA DL 9660.

SUITE NO. 6, IN D, BWV 1012 (3 Editions)

—Janigro, on WESTMINSTER WL 5348.

—Fuchs, on DECCA DL 9544.

[—Janos Starker, cello. 12-in. PERIOD 543 (with Suite No. 3). \$4.98.]

SONATA IN A MINOR FOR UNACCOMPANIED FLUTE, BWV 1013 (See Sonatas for Flute and Clavier, BWV 1030-1035)

SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND CLAVIER, BWV 1014-1019, COMPLETE (1 Edition)

These six sonatas are among the cream of Bach's chamber music. All of them have the clear-cut themes, the variety of moods, the extraordinary harmonic ingenuity, and the unsurpassable contrapuntal skill characteristic of their composer. Most of the slow movements are very beautiful (the Largo of No. 5 is a particularly outstanding example), and most of the fast ones have an incisiveness and a communicative power that raise them above the status of merely skillfully wrought sound-patterns. The theme of the first Allegro of No. 3 has such a catchy, folk-like character that it is surprising that the Tin Pan Alley boys haven't done anything with it yet. Each of the first five sonatas is in four sections, in the order slow-fast-slow-fast. The sixth is the maverick of the group: it is in five sections; the key scheme does not follow the pattern that is pretty consistently observed in the others; and the work is the only one of the six that has a movement for clavier solo. Bach tinkered with this sonata twice after its first version was finished.

It is regrettable that no satisfactory recording of the set is now available. The harpsichord is much to be preferred to the piano here. Not only does its tone harmonize better with that of the fiddle, but it has the required rhythmic precision and, because of its coupler mechanism, a brightness of timbre that the piano lacks. One has only to compare the Landowska recording of No. 3 (see below) with the same work in the present set to see how pale, relatively, the piano is. The performances here are clean and pleasant, if not particularly exciting. There is an excellent balance between violin and piano. Menuhin does not penetrate very far below the surface, but he manages to achieve an attractive tone without too much vibrato.

—Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Louis Kentner, piano. Two 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 1016/17. \$4.98 each.

SONATA NO. 3, IN E, BWV 1016 (3 Editions)

Both the Columbia and the earlier Victor

are excellent performances. The Menuhin-Landowska still sounds good, despite its age, even though the right-hand part of the harpsichord is sometimes a bit faint. If you want the keyboard part played on a harpsichord, as Bach intended it to be, then this is for you. If you don't mind the piano and prefer a silkier violin tone, the Stern-Zakin is your disk.

—Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Wanda Landowska, harpsichord. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LCT 1120 (with Concerto for Two Violins in D minor). \$3.98.

—Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Zakin, piano. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4862 (with Sonata in E minor, BWV 1023; Sonata in G minor, BWV 1020). \$3.98.

—Menuhin and Kentner, on RCA VICTOR LHMV 1016.

SONATA NO. 5, IN F MINOR, BWV 1018 (2 Editions)

Oistrakh's playing is lovely and somewhat more imaginative than Menuhin's, but the recorded sound is definitely inferior.

—David Oistrakh, violin; Lev Oborin, piano. 12-in. COLOSSEUM CRLP 193 (with Sonata in G minor, BWV 1001; Vitali: Chaconne). \$3.98.

—Menuhin and Kentner, on RCA VICTOR LHMV 1017.

SONATA IN G MINOR FOR VIOLIN (OR FLUTE) AND CLAVIER, BWV 1020 (2 Editions)

An agreeable work, possibly originally for flute rather than violin, with some curiously Brahmsian sixths in the Adagio. Its authenticity has been questioned, but most authorities consider it an early work by Bach. Nicely performed by both pairs.

—John Wummer, flute; Fernando Valenti, harpsichord. In WESTMINSTER WAL 216 (with Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord). \$5.98.

—Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Zakin, piano. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4862 (with Sonata in E, BWV 1016; Sonata in E minor, BWV 1023). \$3.98.

SONATA IN G FOR VIOLIN AND CLAVIER, BWV 1021 (1 Edition)

This sonata, the discovery of which was announced in 1928, is for violin and figured bass and is played here by violin, harpsichord, and cello. Both the work and its performance are pleasant, if not particularly inspired.

—Ulrich Grehling, violin; Irmgard Lechner, harpsichord; Martin Boehmann, cello. 12-in. OISEAU-LYRE OL 50015 (with Sonata in G, BWV 1038; Sonata in E minor, BWV 1034; Trio in D minor, BWV 1036). \$4.98.

SONATA IN E MINOR FOR VIOLIN AND CLAVIER, BWV 1023 (2 Editions)

This sonata (labeled "partita" on the Columbia disk), for violin and figured bass, consists of a rhapsodic introduction, a fine Adagio, an only moderately interesting Allemande, and a characteristic Gigue. The editor of Stern's version is not named; Rostal uses an edition by Howard Ferguson. Rostal, supported by the more authentic accompanying apparatus, plays with a quite un-Bachian vibrato in the slow movement. There is more fire and less schmalz in the performance by Stern.

—Isaac Stern, violin; Alexander Zakin,

piano, 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4862 (with Sonata in E, BWV 1016; Sonata in G minor, BWV 1020). \$3.98.

—Max Rostal, violin; Frank Pelleg, harpsichord; Antonio Tusa, cello, 12-in. CONCERT HALL CHS 1174 (with Biber: Passacaglia; Tartini: Violin Concerto in G minor). \$4.98.

SONATAS FOR VIOLA DA GAMBA AND CLAVIER, BWV 1027-1029, COMPLETE (3 Editions)

The first of these sonatas, in G major, is an especially attractive work, but the other two seem less interesting, for all their good tunes and impeccable workmanship. Both Wenzinger and Scholz play them very capably. Scholz's tempos in the fast movements are perhaps a little brisker but in some passages his gamba, leading for the moment, is covered up by the harpsichord. This ticklish problem of balance is better solved in the Wenzinger recording. To modern ears the tone of a cello—especially in the hands of a Casals—is more expressive than that of a gamba, but the Columbia recording is another proof that the piano is not often a satisfactory substitute for the harpsichord in baroque ensemble music. The engineers favored the cello here, and the piano sounds a little distant; but even if the balance had been better, Bach's lines would still be blurred on that instrument as played here compared to the sharp, rhythmic crispness of the harpsichord. Some faulty grooves near the end of the first movement of No. 3 on the Vox review disk.

—August Wenzinger, viola da gamba; Fritz Neumeyer, harpsichord, 12-in. ARCHIVE ARC 3009. \$5.98.

—Janos Scholz, viola da gamba; Egida Giordani Sartori, harpsichord, 12-in. VOX PL 9010. \$4.98.

—Pablo Casals, cello; Paul Baumgartner, piano, Two 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4349/50 (with *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* and *Italian Concerto* on latter). \$3.98 each.

SONATA NO. 1, IN G, BWV 1027 (5 Editions)

Fournier's playing here is often fine-grained and elegant, and the balance between cello and piano is better than in the Casals. Since the music goes below the lowest open string of the ordinary viola only once, Vardi is enabled to play it on that instrument without shifting registers except for that one time. He is a skillful violist with a fine tone, but this music does not seem to have stirred his imagination.

—Wenzinger, on ARCHIVE ARC 3009.

—Scholz, on VOX PL 9010.

—Pierre Fournier, cello; Ernest Lush, piano, 12-in. LONDON LL 700 (with short pieces by Bach, Bloch, Kreisler, Debussy, Fauré, Gershwin, Nin). \$3.98.

—Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4349.

—Emanuel Vardi, viola; Vivian Rivkin, piano, 10-in. REGENT MG 5003 (with Sonata No. 2). \$3.00.

SONATA NO. 2, IN D, BWV 1028 (5 Editions)

Good balance and fine tone in the clean and straightforward performance by Piatigorsky and Berkowitz. There are times when the ornament for a particular figure is played by one artist and not the other,

an inconsistency that does not seem justified by the results. Vardi's playing is just as skillful and as unimaginative here as in No. 1; and this time he shifts an octave higher even when he doesn't have to, a procedure that plays hob with Bach's carefully calculated layout.

—Wenzinger, on ARCHIVE ARC 3009.

—Scholz, on VOX PL 9010.

—Gregor Piatigorsky, cello; Ralph Berkowitz, piano, 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 1792 (with Prokofiev: Sonata for Cello and Piano, in C, Op. 119). \$3.98.

—Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4349.

—Emanuel Vardi, viola; Vivian Rivkin, piano, 10-in. REGENT MG 5003 (with Sonata No. 1). \$3.00.

SONATAS FOR FLUTE AND CLAVIER, BWV 1030-1035 (2 Editions)

All four performers are artists, but the Westminster set seems superior for several reasons. While both flutists have a fine tone and phrase musically, Wummer's breath-takings are not audible and Baker's often are. Some of the tempos employed by the former seem better chosen; the first movement of the first sonata and the last movement of the third, for example, sound hurried in the Decca set. The recording in that album is "close-to," with the result that while Baker's full, round tone is done justice to, Miss Marlowe's harpsichord sounds blurry compared with the clean incisiveness of Valenti's instrument, particularly with respect to the tight-hand part. Both pairs omit the first movement of the A major Sonata, which is incomplete in Bach's manuscript. The Westminster set contains, in addition to the six works represented in the Decca, a sonata in G minor (BWV 1020, see above) and one in A minor for unaccompanied flute, BWV 1013.

The authenticity of these last two as well as of two of the other six (BWV 1031 and 1033) has been questioned (contrary to the statement in the Westminster notes, which are unusually poor in several respects). But at least four of the sonatas are undeniably by Bach; and their lovely material and delicate workmanship place them among his most attractive chamber-music compositions.

—John Wummer, flute; Fernando Valenti, harpsichord, Two 12-in. WESTMINSTER WAL 216. \$5.98.

—Julius Baker, flute; Sylvia Marlowe, harpsichord, Two 12-in. DECCA DX 113. \$7.96.

SONATA IN E MINOR, BWV 1034 (3 Editions)

The Oiseau-Lyre is a well-played performance whose excellence is enhanced by the addition of a cello, customary in Bach's time.

—Kurt Redel, flute; Irmgard Lechner, harpsichord; Martin Bochmann, cello, 12-in. OISEAU-LYRE 50015 (with Sonata in G, BWV 1038; Sonata in G, BWV 1021; Trio in D minor, BWV 1036). \$4.98.

—Wummer and Valenti, in WESTMINSTER WAL 216.

—Baker and Marlowe, in DECCA DX 113.

TRIO IN D MINOR FOR FLUTE, OBOE, AND CLAVIER, BWV 1036 (1 Edition) Originally written for two violins and clavir, this work may not be by Bach

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at all. It has two expressive slow movements and two sprightly fast ones. Good performance.

—Kurt Redel, flute; Helmut Winschermann, oboe; Irmgard Lechner, harpsichord. 12-in. OISEAU-LYRE OL 50015 (with Sonata in G, BWV 1038; Sonata in E minor, BWV 1034; Sonata in G, BWV 1021). \$4.98.

SONATA IN G FOR FLUTE, VIOLIN, AND CLAVIER, BWV 1038 (2 Editions)

This trio is built throughout upon the same figured bass as the sonata in the same key for violin and continuo, BWV 1021. It has been suggested that the present work may be the product of one or more of Bach's Leipzig pupils, attempting to fashion a new work on a foundation taken from one of the master's com-

positions. The attempt, I should say, was successful. In any case, the comparison between two works with the same bass but almost entirely different superstructures is interesting and instructive. The Oiseau-Lyre performance is competent, employs a harpsichord, and was recorded with more "presence"; the Columbia recording is still adequate, uses a piano, and the players are excellent. My own tendency would be to lean towards the slightly less elegant playing of the Oiseau-Lyre because of its harpsichord and better sound. —Kurt Redel, flute; Ulrich Grehling, violin; Irmgard Lechner, harpsichord. 12-in. OISEAU-LYRE OL 50015 (with Sonata in E minor, BWV 1034; Sonata in G, BWV 1021; Trio in D minor, BWV 1036). \$4.98.

—John Wummer, flute; Isaac Stern, violin; Eugene Istomin, piano. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4353 (with Violin Concerto in A minor; Harpsichord Concerto in F minor; Toccata and Fugue in E minor). \$3.98.

CONCERTOS

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND STRINGS, IN A MINOR, BWV 1041 (6 Editions)

Barylli's playing has a relaxed and easy flow. Either because of the conception or because of the position of the microphone, the solo instrument is not very assertive; and the effect is of an orchestral concerto with occasional solos for one of the instruments. The highs are a bit strong here. The Heifetz has livelier tempos and more tension. The old maestro is here at the top of his form and in that happy condition he is still unbeatable. Stern, in the earlier Columbia disk, plays beautifully too, and his Andante is particularly poetic; but its effect is diluted by the heaviness with which Casals stresses the strong beats of the *ostinato* figure. Stern himself tends, in the first movement, to add emphasis to notes that are prominent anyway. These defects largely disappear in the performance with Ormandy; but here there is no continuo instrument, and it is missed especially in the first movement, which contains a number of passages where nothing is heard between the violin and the basses. The Barchet is acceptable, despite slowish tempos and slightly overaccented highs; to me this soloist's tone is not as attractive as that of the others. Bernstein plays neatly, but there is some surface noise; and the lack of a keyboard instrument here too, as well as too much diffidence on the part of the upper orchestral strings, results in frequent gaps between top and bottom.

—Jascha Heifetz, violin; Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 1818 (with Violin Concerto in E). \$3.98. —Isaac Stern, violin; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 5087 (with Violin Concerto in E; Vivaldi: Concerto for Two Violins in A minor). \$3.98. —Isaac Stern, violin; Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4353 (with Toccata and Fugue in E minor; Harpsichord Concerto in F minor; Trio Sonata, BWV 1038). \$3.98.

—Reinhold Barchet, violin; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Walther Davisson, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9150 (with Violin Concerto in E; Concerto for Two Violins in D minor). \$4.98.

—Walter Barylli, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WL 5318 (with Violin Concerto in E). \$2.99.

—Joseph Bernstein, violin; Concert Hall String Ensemble. 12-in. CONCERT HALL CHC 40 (with Vivaldi: Violin Concerto in A minor; Violin Sonata in A). \$4.98.

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND STRINGS, IN E, BWV 1042 (7 Editions)

Several excellent performances of this fine concerto, with its unusually interesting adumbration of symphonic working-out in the first Allegro and its brooding and poetic slow movement. Only the Stevens has difficulty getting off the ground, and its sound is not as smooth as that of the

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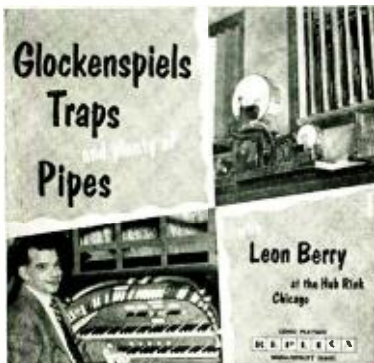
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others. The remarks made above concerning Heifetz, Barchet, and Barylli, in connection with the A minor Concerto, are also applicable here. As far as beauty of tone is concerned, Francescatti and Goldberg are here in a class with Heifetz. But there is a tinge of nervousness in Francescatti's playing of some of the rapid figures in the first movement, and the Goldberg disk contains distortion in loud passages. Oistrakh's playing is oversweet in the slow movement and one misses a continuo in his recording.

—Jascha Heifetz, violin; Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 1818 (with Violin Concerto in A minor). \$3.98.

—Zino Francescatti, violin; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, George Szell, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4648 (with Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No. 2). \$3.98.

—Szymon Goldberg, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Susskind, cond. 10-in. DECCA DL 7507. \$2.98.

—Reinhold Barchet, violin; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Walther Davisson, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9150 (with Violin Concerto in A minor; Concerto for Two Violins in D minor). \$4.98.

—Walter Barylli, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WL 5318 (with Violin Concerto in A minor). \$2.99.

—David Oistrakh, violin; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 5087 (with Violin Concerto in A minor; Vivaldi: Concerto for Two Violins in A minor). \$3.98.

—Louis Stevens, violin; Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond. 12-in. ROYALE 1367 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 2). \$1.89.

CONCERTO FOR TWO VIOLINS AND STRINGS, IN D MINOR, BWV 1043 (6 Editions)

This is one of the loveliest and most popular of all the Bach concertos. The best recorded sound may be found in Menuhin-De Vito, Barchet-Beh, and Krebbers-Olof. The last of these may be dismissed at once, because of its sluggish tempos. The Barchet-Beh is a competent but rather unimaginative affair; the first movement is a little too comfortable and lacks excitement, while the slow movement actually drags in spots. This leaves the Menuhin-De Vito, which is a large-scaled conception with a broad sweep. Probably the best violin playing is that offered by Stern-Schneider. There is a good deal of sensitive phrasing here, but especially in the Largo perhaps too much attention to detail, at the expense of the long line—a somewhat romantic approach. The Heifetz affair, with its too fast tempos, is of interest only as an engineering stunt. As for the old Menuhin-Enesco recording, it has a sentimental appeal because of the collaboration of the young artist with his celebrated teacher, but the sound is no longer acceptable.

—Yehudi Menuhin, Gioconda de Vito, violins; Philharmonia Orchestra, Anthony Bernard, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 16 (with Handel: Trio Sonata No. 2 in D; Vivaldi: Concerto in C. *Il Piacere*). \$4.98.

—Reinhold Barchet, Will Beh, violins; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Walther Davisson, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9150 (with Violin Concertos in A minor and E). \$4.98.

—Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider, violins; Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4351 (with Concerto for Violin and Oboe in C minor). \$3.98.

—Herman Krebbers, Theo Olof, violins; Hague Philharmonic Orchestra, Willem van Otterloo, cond. 12-in. EPIC LC 3036 (with Beethoven: Romances in G and F). \$3.98.

—Jascha Heifetz (both solo parts); RCA Victor Chamber Orchestra, Franz Waxman, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 1051 (with Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 4). \$3.98.

—Yehudi Menuhin, Georges Enesco, violins; Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LCT 1120 (with Sonata in E). \$3.98.

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND STRINGS, IN D MINOR (1 Edition)

This is an attempt, by an unnamed person, to restore the violin concerto that is presumed to have been transcribed by Bach into his Harpsichord Concerto in D minor, BWV 1052. It is an interesting experiment, more plausible in some sections than in others; but its interest was somewhat lessened for this listener by the heavy accents Casals sees fit to make on the first of each pair of eighth notes in the Adagio and by Szigeti's excessive vibrato in the same movement. A piano is used for the continuo.

—Joseph Szigeti, violin; Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4352 (with Concerto for Clavier, Violin, and Flute in A minor). \$3.98.

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN, OBOE AND STRINGS (See Concerto for Two Harpsichords and Strings, in C minor, BWV 1060)

CONCERTO FOR CLAVIER, VIOLIN, FLUTE AND STRINGS, IN A MINOR, BWV 1044 (1 Edition)

"The general character" of this concerto, says Spitta, "is not so much deep or grand as cheerful, delicate, and refined." The first and last movements are based on a Prelude and Fugue in the same key for clavier (BWV 894) and the Adagio, for the soloists alone, similarly derives from the slow movement of the third Organ Sonata (BWV 527). These are not mere transcriptions but re-creations, and the result is not a pastiche but a fine work that deserves to be heard oftener than it is. The flute is a little too far back in the Allegro and the orchestral sound is rather heavy, but otherwise performance and recording are good.

—Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano; Alexander Schneider, violin; John Wummer, flute; Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4352 (with Violin Concerto in D minor). \$3.98.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS, BWV 1046-1051, COMPLETE (7 Editions)

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involved in capturing their sound with the proper clarity and balance. These difficulties derive from the combinations of solo instruments of such different tonal weights and powers of projection as oboes and *violino piccolo* (in No. 1); trumpeter, recorder, oboe, and violin (in No. 2); violin and recorders (in No. 4); and harpsichord and strings (in No. 5). Two of these sets—the Haas and the Horenstein—use the exact instrumentation called for by Bach throughout. All, as will be seen, have some trouble with balance.

Bach is best served, it seems to me, by Prohaska, Sacher, and Münchinger. There is little to choose among them. In all of them the tempos are convincing, and the conductors perform with the right blend of manliness and tenderness. The

special virtues of the Prohaska set will be dealt with below. Sacher's players perform so well together that they even trill as one man. In the matter of embellishments Sacher is bolder than the other conductors: he adds many unwritten ornaments at likely places, a procedure that was very probably followed in Bach's own time. Münchinger's basses sound more resonant than Prohaska's; and there is indeed very little at which one could cavil in this set, aside from the slight changes in instrumentation. The Horenstein set is on the whole competently performed, and it includes the printed score. Haas's tempos lean towards the slow and heavy. The Reiner set has some fine qualities and is well worth looking into if economy is a factor. The Casals performance cannot be recommended,

despite excellent playing by some of the soloists. The orchestral sound is relatively coarse, and in several places one is made unpleasantly aware of this conductor's curious habit of overaccenting the strong beats.

—Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Felix Prohaska, cond. Three 12-in. VANGUARD BG 540/42. \$14.94.

—Chamber Orchestra of Basel, Paul Sacher, cond. Two 12-in. EPIC SC 6008. \$7.96.

—Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. Two 12-in. (Nos. 1, 4, 5, 6); one 10-in. (Nos. 2, 3). LONDON LL 222, LL 144. \$3.98 each. LS 226. \$2.98.

—Anonymous Orchestra, Jascha Horenstein, cond. Two 12-in. VOX DL 122. \$9.96.

—London Baroque Ensemble, Karl Haas, cond. Three 12-in. WESTMINSTER WAL 309. \$8.97.

—Soloists and Chamber Group, Fritz Reiner, cond. Three 12-in. COLUMBIA RL 3104/06. \$1.98 each.

—Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. Three 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4345/47 (the last with excerpts from *Musical Offering*). \$3.98 each.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 1, BWV 1046 (7 Editions)

Very good performances by Prohaska, Münchinger, Sacher, and Horenstein. Haas's Minuet is slow, and Casals' first movement heavy-footed. In the Prohaska the troublesome horn parts are beautifully played. Münchinger's and Horenstein's horns are almost as fine; Sacher's sound a bit muffled, Haas's not as clean and clear, and Reiner's too loud. The Sacher basses are a little thin. Münchinger, Reiner, and Casals use an ordinary violin instead of a *violino piccolo*.

—Prohaska, on VANGUARD BG 540.

—Münchinger, on LONDON LL 222.

—Horenstein, in VOX DL 122.

—Sacher, on EPIC LC 3166.

—Reiner, on COLUMBIA RL 3104.

—Haas, on WESTMINSTER WL 5172.

—Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4345.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 2, BWV 1047 (11 Editions)

The famous trumpeter part is magnificently played in the Prohaska. We are not told what kind of trumpet is used there; but whatever it is, it sounds mellow and, while lacking the sharpness of the excellent trumpeter in the Münchinger, blends better with the other instruments. It is handled with such virtuosity by Helmut Wobisch that we don't have to sit on the edge of our chairs and pray for the poor man. Prohaska's flute is a little faint. Sacher's trumpeter part is managed well enough, though not with the superb assurance shown by Prohaska's man. The Fischer recording is also first-rate. Benda's trumpeter is delicate and precise, but the flute is seldom clearly audible in the fast movements and the violin tone is harsh. In the Horenstein the trumpeter is too far back and the oboe sometimes too loud, as is the trumpeter in the Reiner. The fast movements sound hurried in the Casals. The "Centennial" has relatively high surface noise, and the Ludwig has rumbling basses and a trumpeter that, like Haas's, plays an octave lower than it should. All but Haas and Horenstein use a flute instead



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of a recorder; and Casals employs a soprano saxophone instead of a trumpet.

—Prohaska, on VANGUARD BG 540.
 —Münchinger, on LONDON LS 226.
 —Sacher, on EPIC LC 3166.
 —Philharmonia Orchestra, Edwin Fischer, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 8 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 5). \$4.98.
 —Horenstein, in VOX DL 122.
 —Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Hans von Benda, cond. 12-in. TELEFUNKEN LGX 66012 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 5). \$4.98.
 —Reiner, on COLUMBIA RL 3104.
 —Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4345.
 —Haas, on WESTMINSTER WL 5113.
 —Centennial [Boston] Symphony Orchestra, [Serge Koussevitzky, cond.]. 12-in. RCA CAMDEN CAL 147 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 5). \$1.98.
 —Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond. 12-in. ROYALE 1367 (with Violin Concerto in E). \$1.89.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO No. 3, BWV 1048 (11 Editions)

This concerto consists of two fast movements separated, in the printed score, by two slow chnrds. It seems obvious that the two chords are merely an indication for a cadenza to be improvised by the harpsichord player. A cadenza of reasonable length and weight would set off the two fast movements from each other properly. Only two of these recordings provide such a cadenza—the Prohaska and the Sacher. The others, with one exception, supply either a very brief one or simply the two chords. Reiner merely plays the chords, but otherwise his performance is as good as any; as is Horenstein's also. Haas's tempos are rather slow. Perhaps the finest sound is offered on the Page disk. This is an intelligent reading, but lacks a continuo instrument. The Wøldike performance is clean and clear. The Balzer employs a large body of strings and has an impressive breadth. Unfortunately, there is some distortion in tuttis, and on the review disk the first few measures were missing and there were clicks. The sound of the "Centennial" will not please readers of this magazine, and the conductor has interpolated a "sinfonia" in place of the cadenza.

—Prohaska, on VANGUARD BG 541.
 —Sacher, on EPIC LC 3166.
 —Münchinger, on LONDON LS 226.
 —Reiner, on COLUMBIA RL 3105.
 —Horenstein, in VOX DL 122.
 —Chamber Orchestra of the Palace Chapel (Copenhagen), Mogens Wøldike, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 1048 (with *Brandenburg* Concertos Nos. 4 and 5). \$4.98.
 —Haas, on WESTMINSTER WL 5174.
 —New Orchestral Society of Boston, Willis Page, cond. 12-in. COOK 1062 (with Bach-Bachrich: Suite for Strings; Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 5; Stravinsky: Concerto in D for String Orchestra). \$4.98.
 —Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4345.
 —Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Balzer, cond. 12-in. ROYALE 1438 (with Suite No. 4). \$1.89.
 —Centennial [Boston] Symphony Orchestra, [Serge Koussevitzky, cond.]. 12-in. RCA CAMDEN CAL 174 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 4; C. P. E. Bach: Concerto for Orchestra in D). \$1.98.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO No. 4, BWV 1049 (9 Editions)

Only three of these performances employ the recorders called for by Bach instead of flutes. In the Prohaska they have a beautifully round and clear tone; in the Horenstein they are occasionally overwhelmed by the solo violin in the first movement; and in the Haas they sound thin and wheezy. Otherwise all of these recordings, as well as the Münchinger and the Wøldike, are pretty much on a par. Sacher's harpsichord is too loud in spots and Reiner's rapid movements seem too fast. The sound of the "Centennial" is still acceptable in general, though there is some distortion in loud passages.
 —Prohaska, on VANGUARD BG 541.
 —Horenstein, in VOX DL 122.
 —Münchinger, on LONDON LL 222.
 —Sacher, on EPIC LC 3167.
 —Haas, on WESTMINSTER WL 5113; also WL 5067 (with Cantata No. 152).
 —Danish State Radio Chamber Orchestra, Mogens Wøldike, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 1048 (with *Brandenburg* Concertos Nos. 3 and 5). \$4.98.
 —Reiner, on COLUMBIA RL 3105.
 —Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4346.
 —Centennial [Boston] Symphony Orchestra, [Serge Koussevitzky, cond.]. 12-in. RCA CAMDEN CAL 174 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 3; C. P. E. Bach: Concerto for Orchestra in D). \$1.98.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO No. 5, BWV 1050 (12 Editions)

Several excellent performances here, but only one in which the balance is completely satisfactory—the Münchinger. In the Prohaska and the Sacher the flute is not always loud enough; and the right-hand part of the harpsichord does not always come through as clearly as it should in the Horenstein, the Reiner, and the Benda. The Wøldike is acceptable but not outstanding. Haas's reading is on the heavy side. The Fischer has excellent balance but there are occasional retards and *accelerandi*. Here, as in the Casals and the "Centennial," a piano is employed instead of a harpsichord. The last-named is a typical virtuoso symphony orchestra performance with somewhat too fast tempos for the first and third movements. In the List version the sound is quite poor, the highs being so exaggerated that one's controls are helpless.
 —Münchinger, on LONDON LL 222.
 —Prohaska, on VANGUARD BG 542.
 —Sacher, on EPIC LC 3167.
 —Horenstein, in VOX DL 122.
 —Reiner, on COLUMBIA RL 3106.
 —Danish State Radio Chamber Orchestra, Mogens Wøldike, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 1048 (with *Brandenburg* Concertos Nos. 3 and 4). \$4.98.
 —Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Hans von Benda, cond. 12-in. TELEFUNKEN LGX 66012 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 2). \$4.98.
 —Haas, on WESTMINSTER WL 5174.
 —Philharmonia Orchestra, Edwin Fischer, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 8 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 2). \$4.98.
 —Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4346.
 —Centennial [Boston] Symphony Orchestra, [Serge Koussevitzky, cond.]. 12-in. RCA CAMDEN CAL 147 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 2). \$1.98.

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—Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Karl List, cond. 12-in. ROYALE 1372 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 6). \$1.89.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 6, BWV 1051 (8 Editions)

The performances here range from excellent to merely competent. The sound of the Prohaska is particularly rich and round and the next four are almost as satisfying. The Haas is rather dull and thick, the Casals coarse, and the List dry, with over-accented highs.

—Prohaska, on VANGUARD BG 542.

—Münchinger, on LONDON LL 144.

—Sacher, on EPIC LC 3167.

—Horenstein, in VOX DL 122.

—Reiner, on COLUMBIA RL 3106.

—Haas, on WESTMINSTER WL 5172.

—Casals, on COLUMBIA ML 4347.

—Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Karl List, cond. 12-in. ROYALE 1372 (with *Brandenburg* Concerto No. 5). \$1.89.

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 1, IN D MINOR, BWV 1052 (4 Editions)

The violin concerto of which this is presumably a transcription is not known. (See above, Concerto for Violin and Strings in D minor.) Some scholars believe that the model was not one of Bach's own compositions. Be that as it may, the concerto, in the form that has survived, is one of the finest of the lot, with a vigorous and passionate first movement, a brooding Adagio, and a lively finale. Bach seems to have been especially fond of it, because he used portions of it again in two sacred cantatas (Nos. 146 and 188). The Landowska is the most vital of these performances, but unfortunately the recording, made in 1938, sounds practically prehistoric. Both the Haydn Society and the Vox recordings are energetic and straightforward, doing justice to the differing qualities of the fast movements but a bit heavy and lacking in nuance in the Adagio. Viderø plays with sweeping and intelligent virtuosity; Elsner is also skillful and spirited. At the beginning of the Vox the sound of the harpsichord is occasionally drowned by the strings, but the balance soon improves. The basses in this recording sometimes have a fuzzy sound. The Decca version is thinner and more restrained. Foss wisely does not attempt to exploit the properties of the piano. Except for a long curve that swells and diminishes in the pedal point for solo cembalo near the end of the first movement, his instrument sounds like a liquid harpsichord, as far as his style of playing is concerned.

—Finn Viderø, harpsichord; Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum (Copenhagen), Lavard Friisholm, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSL 92 (with Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 4 and 5). \$5.95.

—Helma Elsner, harpsichord; Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9510 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 2). \$4.98.

—Lukas Foss, piano; Zimmler String Sinfonietta. 12-in. DECCA DL 9601 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 5). \$3.98.

—Wanda Landowska, harpsichord; string ensemble, Eugène Bigot, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 1974 (with Two-Part Inventions). \$3.98.

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 2, IN E, BWV 1053 (2 Editions)

A less interesting work than No. 1 but still worth an occasional hearing. Elsner's performance is robust and the recording is good, except for the sound of the basses, which is sometimes gruff.

—Helma Elsner, harpsichord; Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9510 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 1). \$4.98.

[—Hans Andreae, harpsichord; Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Kromer, cond. 10-in. CONCERT HALL 33. \$3.98.]

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 3, IN D, BWV 1054 (3 Editions)

A transcription of the Violin Concerto in E (BWV 1042). Both Nef and Rapf play well, but the Oiseau-Lyre orchestra sounds ponderous in the fast movements, and tutti chords are heavily punched out. —Kurt Rapf, harpsichord; Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Rapf, cond. 12-in. VANGUARD BG 509 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 4). \$4.98.

—Isabelle Nef, harpsichord; Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oiseau-Lyre, Pierre Colombo, cond. 12-in. OISEAU-LYRE OL 50042 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 5). \$4.98.

[—M. Van der Lyck, harpsichord; Ton Studio Orchestra (Stuttgart), Michael, cond. 12-in. PERIOD 547 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 6). \$4.98.]

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 4, IN A, BWV 1055 (3 Editions)

This fine work has a sunny, cheerful first movement, one of those brooding sicilianos that Bach loved to write as a slow movement, and a bright and dancing finale. Both available performances are satisfactory, but the Haydn Society recording seems to be richer in highs, though not exaggeratedly so.

—Finn Viderø, harpsichord; Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum (Copenhagen), Lavard Friisholm, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSL 92 (with Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 1 and 5). \$5.95.

—Kurt Rapf, harpsichord; Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Rapf, cond. 12-in. VANGUARD BG 509 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 3). \$4.98.

[—Helma Elsner, harpsichord; Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 7260 (with Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 5 and 7). \$4.98.]

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 5, IN F MINOR, BWV 1056 (5 Editions)

A lovely work with a nobly melancholy first movement and a dramatic finale. Of the two available harpsichord recordings, the Nef instrument has the more charming tone but her conductor is rather ponderous and indulges in an enormous retard at the end of the slow movement. The Viderø is nicely played and would be unreservedly recommended if the Largo were not so four-square. If you prefer the piano, Foss's playing is cleaner and crisper than Haskil's, but that lady has the advantage of a more eloquent orchestra, which is also more precise in the plucked

chords of the Largo. None of these recordings is ideal, but for all-around merit, including the proper performance of the ornaments, I should choose the Viderg.

—Finn Viderg, harpsichord; Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum (Copenhagen), Lavard Friisholm, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSL 92 (with Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 1 and 4). \$5.95.

—Isabelle Nef, harpsichord; Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oiseau-Lyre, Pierre Colombo, cond. 12-in. OISEAU-LYRE OL 50042 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 3). \$4.98.

—Lukas Foss, piano; Zimmler String Sinfonietta. 12-in. DECCA DL 9601 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 1). \$3.98.

—Clara Haskil, piano; Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4353 (with Violin Concerto in A minor; Toccata and Fugue in E minor; Sonata for Violin, Piano, and Flute). \$3.98.

—Helma Elsner, harpsichord; Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 7260 (with Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 4 and 7). \$4.98.]

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 6, IN F, BWV 1057 (1 Edition)

[—M. Van der Lyck, harpsichord; Ton Studio Orchestra (Stuttgart), Michael, cond. 12-in. PERIOD 547 (with Harpsichord Concerto No. 3). \$4.98.]

CONCERTO FOR HARPSICHORD AND STRINGS, NO. 7, IN G MINOR, BWV 1058 (1 Edition)

[—Helma Elsner, harpsichord; Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 7260 (with Harpsichord Concertos Nos. 4 and 5). \$4.98.]

CONCERTO FOR TWO HARPSICHORDS AND STRINGS, IN C MINOR, BWV 1060 (2 Editions)

One of Bach's finest concertos. It has an expressive first movement, whose principal theme, first presented by the full ensemble, ends with a charming echo in the harpsichords; the slow movement is a serene dialogue between the two keyboard instruments accompanied by plucked strings; and the finale is gay, despite the minor key. It is clearly and briskly played on the Vox disk. This work is thought to be a transcription by Bach of a lost earlier concerto for violin and oboe. Several attempts have been made to reconstruct the original from the transcription. One of these attempts is recorded on the same side of the Vox. Transposed to D minor, it is a plausible version; the transcriber mostly allots the right-hand part of Harpsichord I to the violin and the same part of Harpsichord II to the oboe. For some reason, however, he (or the conductor) omits the continuo that Bach would undoubtedly have required in the original version. The soloists on the Columbia disk are both first-class but the sound is rather dull and dry.

—Helma Elsner, Rolf Reinhardt, harpsichords; Will Beh, violin; Friedrich Milde, oboe; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9580 (with Concerto for Two Harpsichords in C). \$4.98.

—Isaac Stern, violin; Marcel Tabuteau,

*"ONCE UPON A TIME there was an aged man.
He had nine handsome boys.
Never had he taught them any handicraft,
be taught them only how to hunt in forests dark.
There they roamed, hunted all the year round,
and changed into stags in forests dark and wild.*

*"Never will their antlers enter gates and doors,
but only woods and shrubs;
never will their bodies wear a shirt and coat,
but only foliage;
nevermore their feet will walk on houses floors,
but only on the sward;
nevermore their mouth will drink from cups and jugs,
but from the clearest springs."*

This is the recapitulation of the Rumanian folk-ballad, in Béla Bartók's translation, on which he based his *Cantata Profana*. The work was recorded by Walter Susskind, The London New Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Richard Lewis and Marko Rothmuller, solos. If not available from your store, the record may be ordered directly from Bartók Records, 113 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y., for \$5.95.

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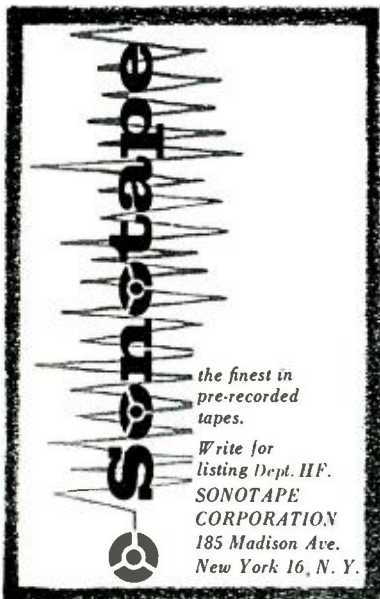


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oboe; Prades Festival Orchestra, Pablo Casals, cond. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4351 (with Concerto for Two Violins in D minor). \$3.98.

CONCERTO FOR TWO HARPSICHORDS AND STRINGS, IN C, BWV 1061 (3 Editions)

This is one harpsichord concerto that does not seem to be a transcription. The lovely slow movement and the fine fugue that serves as finale more than make up for a first movement whose thematic material strikes this listener as emotionally neutral and in which the two claviers function as hardly more than counterpoint machines. Both the Vox and the Concert Hall versions are on the whole excellently performed, although the latter chooses a rather breathless tempo for the first movement and the entrances of the fugue subject in the harpsichords could be clearer in the former. The Victor recording dates from 1936; it is still acceptable, although in the transfer to LP, tape hiss has crept in, especially in the last two movements. The Schnabels play it competently. Surprisingly, there seems to be a slight difference of opinion between father and son about the phrasing of the fugue subject.

—Helma Elsner, Rolf Reinhardt, harpsichords; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 9580 (with Concerto for Two Harpsichords in C minor; Concerto for Violin and Oboe in D minor). \$4.98.

—Hans Andrae, Theodor Sack, harpsichords; Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Clemens Dahinden, cond. 12-in. CONCERT HALL CHS 1081 (with Haydn: Concerto in F for Violin and Harpsichord). \$4.98.

—Artur Schnabel, Karl Ulrich Schnabel, pianos; London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LCT 1140 (with Mozart: Concerto in E-flat, K. 365). \$3.98.

CONCERTO FOR TWO HARPSICHORDS AND STRINGS, IN C MINOR, BWV 1062 (1 Edition)

A transcription of the great D minor Concerto for Two Violins (BWV 1043). The transference is faithful, and a fascinating glimpse into Bach's workshop is afforded by the small changes he makes in order to accommodate to keyboard instruments the two solo parts originally conceived in terms of bowed strings. The orchestra part remains practically unaltered. The more familiar version is considerably the more effective one, but those interested in the transcription will find it very well performed here.

—Finn Vidérø, Søren Sørensen, harpsichords; Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum (Copenhagen), Lavard Friisholm, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSL 115 (with Concerto for Three Harpsichords in D minor). \$5.95.

CONCERTO FOR THREE HARPSICHORDS AND STRINGS, IN D MINOR, BWV 1063 (3 Editions)

For ideal results in listening to this and the following concerto at home, we really should grow a third ear and require audio engineers to develop trinaural reproduction. Only thus could we do full justice to the masterly way in which Bach keeps each

clavier an independent entity while yet blending all of them into a superb ensemble. In the concert hall, of course, when the three instruments are well separated, the problem does not arise; but when the sound comes out of a single speaker it is impossible to tell which is doing what, unless one is following with a score. Pending the necessary anatomical and acoustic developments, however, we shall have to be satisfied with what nature and the engineers have bestowed upon us.

Friisholm takes the first movement more crisply than Reinhardt and his last movement is gayer, though perhaps a bit too fast. The Siciliano has more character in the Reinhardt performance (it is a little too brisk in the Friisholm), even though Miss Elsner plays the short cadenza metronomically instead of like an improvisation. Throughout this version the low strings tend to lag slightly behind the harpsichords. Of these two disks, the Friisholm would seem to have a slight edge in musical value, while the Reinhardt has the definite advantage of containing an additional work. The Regent record is nicely done, but uses pianos and has tape hiss in the second and third movements; its sound is not the most faithful imaginable.

—Finn Vidérø, Søren Sørensen, Eyvind Møller, harpsichords; Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum (Copenhagen), Lavard Friisholm, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSL 115 (with Concerto for Two Harpsichords in C minor). \$5.95.

—Helma Elsner, Rolf Reinhardt, Franzpeter Goebels, harpsichords; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 8670 (with Concerto for Three Harpsichords in C; Concerto for Four Harpsichords). \$4.98.

—Tanana-Nicoiayeva, Dmitri Shostakovich, Paul Serebryakov, pianos; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. 10-in. REGENT MG 5020 (with Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 6). \$5.45.

CONCERTO FOR THREE HARPSICHORDS AND STRINGS, IN C, BWV 1064 (3 Editions)

Whether this is an original work or a transcription of a concerto for three violins by Bach or someone else, is unknown. There is not much to choose between the Vox and Haydn Society recordings. Both are well performed. The Vox has a slight advantage in that the balance in it is somewhat better (the orchestra is more distinct in the first movement) and its performance has a little more vitality. Also, it contains three works instead of two. A disadvantage is that it has no visible separation between movements, while the other two disks have such bands. The far greater dynamic flexibility of the piano enables the Victor performers to obtain sharper contrast between *piano* and *forte* and allows them to bring out the principal lines better. In the Victor first movement, however, there are slight fluctuations in tempo; these were no doubt introduced for expressive purposes but the effect they produce is of nervousness.

—Helma Elsner, Renate Noll, Franzpeter Goebels, harpsichords; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 8670 (with Concerto

for Three Harpsichords in D minor; Concerto for Four Harpsichords). \$4.98.

—Christa Fuhrmann, Bruno Seidlhofer, Erna Heiller, harpsichords; Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Anton Heiller, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSLP 1024 (with Concerto for Four Harpsichords). \$5.95.

—Edwin Fischer, Ronald Smith, Denis Matthews, pianos; Philharmonia Orchestra, Fischer, cond. 12-in. RCA VICTOR LHMV 1004 (with Mozart: Piano Concerto in C, K. 503). \$4.98.

CONCERTO FOR FOUR HARPSICHORDS AND STRINGS, IN A MINOR, BWV 1065 (2 Editions)

It would have been interesting to have on the same disk the Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins of which this is a transcription. Both of the present performances are acceptable. Reinhardt takes the jolly first movement more briskly than Heiller, but the latter maintains a slightly better balance between the solo instruments and the orchestra, which is occasionally too prominent in the Vox.

—Helma Elsner, Renate Noll, Franzpeter Goebels, Willy Spilling, harpsichords; Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart), Rolf Reinhardt, cond. 12-in. VOX PL 8670 (with Concerto for Three Harpsichords in D minor; Concerto for Three Harpsichords in C). \$4.98.

—Erna Heiller, Bruno Seidlhofer, Christa Fuhrmann, Kurt Rapp, harpsichords; Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Anton Heiller, cond. 12-in. HAYDN HSLP 1024 (with Concerto for Three Harpsichords in C). \$5.95.

SUITES FOR ORCHESTRA

SUITES (OR OVERTURES), BWV 1066-1069, COMPLETE (5 Editions)

Bach is at his gayest and most charming in the dances of these suites, and most of the conductors of the complete sets do justice to those qualities as well as to the graver moods of the overtures proper. The choice, it seems to me, lies between the Prohaska and the Scherchen. In the former version there are excellent playing, clean sound, good tempos, and considerable nuance. There is also a bonus: the overtures of the Third and Fourth Suites are played twice—once (at the beginning of the Suite) with the unwritten dotted rhythms characteristic of the French style and once (at the end) as written. This experiment would have been even more interesting if Prohaska had used a string body of the size available to Bach—say six violins instead of fourteen. Scherchen's orchestra sounds like a fairly large one but it skips about lightly, the strings never overpowering the winds. The general vitality of his performances is enhanced by nuances of dynamics and phrasing that are immanent in the notes but not always brought to the ear—at least in so tasteful a fashion.

Reiner's crack players produce the most beautiful sound of all, but some of his tempos and other interpretative ideas seem questionable. The Hewitt performances are bluff and hearty and not devoid of imagination, but there is more charm in the dances than can be heard on this recording. Klemperer's is an expert job and would have been quite satisfactory if the sound were more lifelike. The highs

are exaggerated, and no amount of fiddling with the controls could bring a true string tone. Both Vanguard and Angel supply the score of the suites.

—Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska, cond. Two 12-in. VANGUARD BG 530/31. \$4.98 each.

—English Baroque Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. Two 12-in. WESTMINSTER WN 2201. \$9.96.

—RCA Victor Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. Two 12-in. RCA VICTOR LM 6012. \$7.96.

—Hewitt Orchestra. Two 12-in. HAYDN HSL 90/91. \$5.95 each.

—Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Two 12-in. ANGEL 3536B. \$9.96.

SUITE NO. 1, IN C, BWV 1066 (9 Editions)

The Casals and Van Beinum are performances of the big-orchestra type rather than the more authentic chamber orchestra kind. If you like that type of sound, you will doubtless enjoy the Hollanders particularly. The Berlin group is presumably smaller but also sounds full, owing probably to the engineering; the audio boys have not, however, solved the problem of attaining realistic violin tone in this one. Casals chooses to omit the Minuet, which is one of the dances marked as optional in the score. (In the other recordings nothing is omitted except an occasional repeat.) Scherchen includes the harpsichord—not prescribed—in the second Bourrée, but its use there is effective. An inner line is stressed by Klemperer in the



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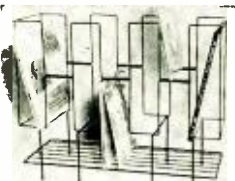
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second Gavotte, for which he can hardly be blamed, because that line has a surprisingly *Meistersingerish* character.

- Prohaska, in **VANGUARD BG 530/31.**
- Scherchen, on **WESTMINSTER WN 18012.**
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- Klemperer, on **ANGEL 35235.**
- Hewitt, on **HAYDN HSL 90.**
- Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Hans von Benda, cond. 12-in. **TELEFUNKEN LGX 66040** (with Suite No. 3). \$4.98.
- [—Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Balzer, cond. 12-in. **ROYALE 1393** (with Suite No. 3). \$1.89.]

SUITE No. 2, IN B MINOR, BWV 1067
(10 Editions)

The best all-round version is the Münchinger. It has style and good sound, though not perhaps the best flutist; and it is the only one, besides the Prohaska, in which the appoggiaturas seem to be played properly. In the Van Beinum the flute is barely audible in nonsolo passages and not far enough forward when it is playing alone. The Casals and the "Centennial" are good of their kind. Both have first-class soloists but both reveal a touch of romanticism here and there. The Centennial has noticeable surface noise. The Stokowski version is heavily "expressive," with Wagnerian swellings and exaggerated retards.

- André Pepin, flute; Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. 12-in. **LONDON LL 848** (with Suite No. 3). \$3.98.
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—Julius Baker, flute; Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. 12-in. **RCA VICTOR LM 1176** (with several Bach transcriptions). \$3.98.

SUITE No. 3, IN D, BWV 1068 (10 Editions)

The Münchinger seems best here, as regards both interpretation and sound. Of special interest is the Weingartner, apparently the only example on LP of that great conductor dealing with Bach. It is, as one would expect, an authoritative performance and, as one might not expect, free of romantic notions. The sound is still mostly adequate but there is a bad splice in the Overture, the trumpets are a little uncertain on high notes and sometimes inaudible, and a continuo is lacking. The "Centennial" has more surface noise than the others and its conductor leans towards fast tempos. Here, too, the trumpets can barely be heard.

- Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. 12-in. **LONDON LL 848** (with Suite No. 2). \$3.98.
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- [—Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Joseph Balzer, cond. 12-in. **ROYALE 1393** (with Suite No. 1). \$1.89.]

SUITE No. 4, IN D, BWV 1069 (6 Editions)

In the slow section of Balzer's Overture there is an attempt to reproduce the sharper rhythms of baroque practice, but it is not as thorough or as convincing here as in the Prohaska version and it results in some rather ragged playing. Otherwise this performance is not outstanding and the sound is dry. Scherchen takes it upon himself to add a descending bassoon line in a portion of the Gavotte.

- Prohaska, in **VANGUARD BG 530/31.**
- Scherchen, on **WESTMINSTER WN 18013.**
- Reiner, in **RCA VICTOR LM 6012.**
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MUSICAL OFFERING, BWV 1079 (3 Editions)

What an endlessly fascinating composition this is! One never ceases to marvel at it, not merely because of what Bach does with the theme supplied by Frederick the Great — he stretches it, he contracts it, he stands it on its head, he works it backwards, he builds a whole trio sonata around it, he subjects it to all sorts of fugal procedures

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— but because the result of all this contrapuntal ingenuity happens to be deeply affecting music as well. Bach indicated the instrumentation for only three of the thirteen sections. Each of the present versions uses a somewhat different instrumental layout. Another problem that has concerned musicologists is the proper order of the sections, which was not clear in the first edition. The solution this listener finds most convincing is that offered by Hans T. David in his admirable edition of the work. David places the trio sonata in the center, flanked on each side by five canons, with the three-part *ricercar* at the beginning and the six-part *ricercar* at the end. Münchinger's version follows David's suggestions about instrumentation in most respects, and the only radical departure from David's text is in the conductor's solution of the four-part puzzle canon—a solution that sounds quite plausible. This performance is live, intelligent, and musical. So is the Scherchen, which employs an edition by Roger Vuataz. Three of the canons are worked out differently here from the way in which they are presented by David; in at least one case the David seems to me better. Neither Münchinger nor Scherchen follows David's structural layout. Both lump the three-part *ricercar* and all ten canons on one side of the disk and the trio sonata and six-part *ricercar* on the other side. The Ghedini, orchestrated by the conductor, is an old-fashioned overblown transcription, with an opening brass fanfare, two pianos, sugary violin solos, and so on. It is about as far away from the spirit of Bach as it is possible to be while still using most of his notes.

—Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. 12-in. LONDON LL 1181. \$3.98.

—Camillo Wanaussek, flute; F. Wächter, oboe; J. Noblinger, English horn; F. Killinger, bassoon; G. Swoboda, A. Bog, violins; A. Kreiner, viola; V. Gorlich, cello; Kurt Rapf, harpsichord; Hermann Scherchen, cond. 12-in. WESTMINSTER WL 5070. \$2.99.

—Scarlatti Orchestra di Napoli, Giorgio Ghedini, cond. 12-in. COLOSSEUM CLPS 1044. \$3.98.

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—J. Wummer, flute; A. Schneider, O. Pernel, violins; M. Thomas, K. Tuttle, violas; L. Teraspulsy, D. Saidenberg, cellos; J. Rotenberg, bass; L. Mannes, piano. 12-in. COLUMBIA ML 4347 (with *Brandenburg Concerto No. 6*). \$3.98.

DIE KUNST DER FUGE

THE ART OF THE FUGUE, BWV 1080 (4 Editions)

It is astonishing to realize that this great work, which was published less than a year after Bach's death, was apparently not performed in public until 1927. True, no one knew how Bach intended it to be performed: in the manuscript it is written mostly on four staves, with no indication of what instrument or instruments are

to play it, and the last fugue breaks off before it is finished. To the nineteenth century this masterpiece, which is not only the epitome of the application of the fugue principle to a single theme but profoundly moving music, was a cold, abstract affair, suitable only for purposes of study. It was only in our own time that scholars began to try to bring the printed notes to life; and so it is that each of these four versions represents a transcription by a living musician. And there are a number of other transcriptions, published but unrecorded. Not only the instrumentation but the order of the sections is unknown. Many editors have proposed many different solutions, each with some logic but none with enough to win any great number of adherents. This, too, is reflected in the present performances: no two of them use the same pattern.

All four have solid values. A choice among them will probably be largely determined by a preference for one medium over others. My own inclination is towards the Redel. To me this contrapuntal music calls for the utmost linear clarity, and this Redel (who conducts his own transcription) supplies in the fugues, using the clearly differentiated but warm and homogeneous voices of the string body, and adding oboes and bassoons occasionally in somewhat the same manner as a discreet organist would add reed stops. For the canons, however, he employs sometimes the harpsichord and sometimes an organ, a procedure which may be legitimate enough but which sounds dull and mechanical here. Moreover, unlike the others, he includes two fugues for harpsichords (No. 2 on Side 4) that are only Bach's arrangements of the preceding Fugue XIII.

Scherchen uses a transcription by Roger Vuataz for strings and woodwinds, the latter including only those with which Bach was familiar. Much of this is very fine, but Fugue IV sounds a little sleepy; VIII and IX seem somewhat overorchestrated; and the bassoon has some trouble with high notes in the Canon at the Octave. The Dichlers play sensitively a transcription for two pianos by Bruno Seidlhofer. The only objection to this (if you don't mind pianos in this music) is that the transcriber has added octaves above and below which sometimes weaken a melodic climax by anticipating the register in which it occurs. The same objection holds in the transcription for harpsichord made by Leonhardt. The polyphony is least clear here, the effect, for example, of Bach's occasional long-held notes being impossible to obtain on this instrument. Leonhardt, for some reason, breaks off the last fugue seven measures before Bach did. The microphone was apparently too close to the harpsichord in this recording. The Dichler, incidentally, is the only version that includes the chorale that was appended to the work after Bach's death.

—Orchestre de Chambre Pro-Arte, Kurt Redel, cond. Two 12-in. WESTMINSTER WAL 220. \$5.98.

—Radio Orchestra of Beromünster, Hermann Scherchen, cond. Three 12-in. LONDON LLA 2. \$11.94.

—Josef and Grete Dichler, pianos. Two 12-in. WESTMINSTER WAL 215. \$5.98.

—Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord. Two 12-in. VANGUARD BG 532/33. \$9.96.

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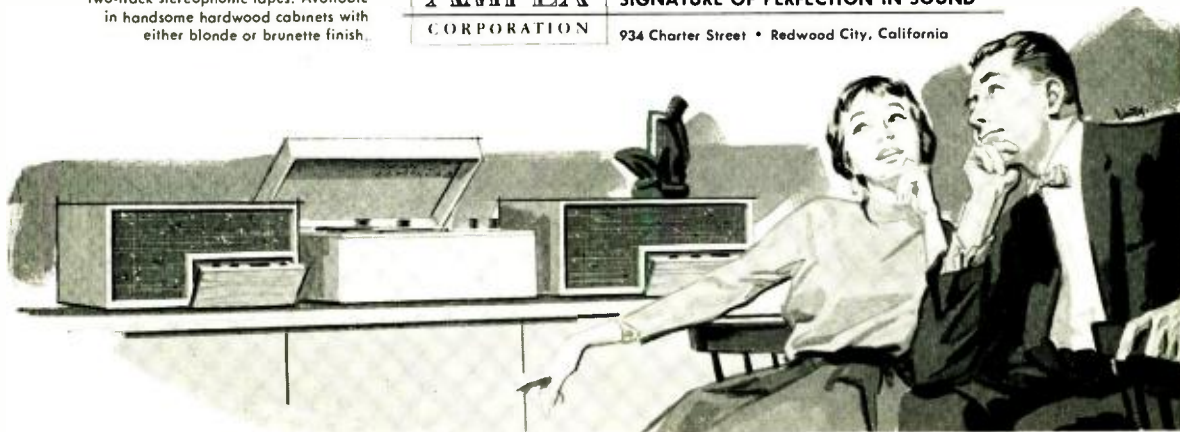
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the Tape Deck

by R. D. Darrell

IT WAS a few months short of thirty years ago that I first ventured into print as a record reviewer, in Vol. I, No. 1 of the pioneer American magazine devoted exclusively to music on disks—the now-long-defunct *Phonograph Monthly Review*. And by curious if blind coincidence, one of the works I wrote about then, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* (conducted by Weingartner for Columbia, in the first electrical recording of a complete symphony), confronts me again today (now in Munch's RCA Victor "stereo" version) among the initial releases received for discussion in this newly launched HIGH FIDELITY column devoted exclusively to tape recordings.

"*Déjà vu!*" I mutter almost superstitiously into my beard, and "*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. . .*" Of course there are tremendous differences in both recorded sound qualities and standards of home reproduction, to say nothing of my own musical and audio philosophies. Yet the supreme significance of magnetic tape recording of today strikes me as much the same as that of the then equally novel and miraculous electrical disk recording of 1926: it can be above all else a galvanizing stimulus to our ears, imaginations, and listening appetites. For magnificent as many current LPs may be, and aurally satisfying as contemporary high-fidelity disk reproduction is at its best, too many listeners have begun to take these high merits smugly for granted. Something almost revolutionary is needed, above and beyond continued technological advances, to bring—as I wrote long ago of electrical recording's bringing—"new thrills to even the most hardened phonograph enthusiast." And surely the strongest candidate for that reanimating function is music on tape, perhaps especially in its quasi-multi-dimensionality of stereo sound.

Now, my personal metamorphosis into a tape reporter, if not evangelist, may appear to some of my fellow discophiles as the act of an unprincipled renegade; while pioneer tape enthusiasts who are familiar with some of my earlier writings on this subject are quite justified in suspecting the "conversion" of an admitted Doubting Thomas where both tape in general and two-channel "stereophony" in particular are concerned. Nevertheless, I sincerely believe that I have neither renounced my allegiance to disks nor abandoned my skeptical attitude toward many of the more outrageously ballyhooed magnetic "miracles." Instead, I'm bold enough to argue that such perhaps die-hard prejudices may well be actually advantageous to an observer of the contemporary recorded-tape scene, since they reflect to a considerable extent the characteristic psychology of the disk-connoisseurs who must finally make up the tape market.

To them, as to me, tape represents a

challenge that is nearly as much resented as welcomed. . . a new medium which so far at least seems to have promised far more than it actually has delivered. . . an unfamiliar mode of listening which can be accepted only if one is prepared to pay a seemingly exorbitant price—in the time and thought required to cope with radically different techniques, as well as for the costly tapes themselves and the still more costly equipment needed to reproduce them properly. I can't honestly minimize the vexing problems or expenses involved, nor guarantee that our home (7.5 ips) tape-reproduction will invariably be superior to that of disks, or, even if so, demonstrably worth the extra expenditures required. The only assurances I can give (at this early stage of my own odyssey) is that any experimentation we are willing to undertake with tape recordings can be great—and incredibly fascinating—fun; that it is sure to prove incalculably stimulating; and that there's a better than fair chance of its proving to be richly rewarding.

Mirages and Realities

But if tape recordings are to capitalize on their current vogue and permanently establish themselves in the musical lives of more than a small fanatical or sophisticated "elite," there must be some debunking of the misconceptions which their first promoters have heedlessly or deliberately encouraged. At the same time, the indisputable and sometimes unique advantages of tape must be made more convincingly apparent than they have been so far.

I don't know how many others share my own annoyance over the looseness of much current tape terminology, but I'm sure that some must find "pre-recorded" as ridiculously redundant as I do. A reel of tape is either blank or a recording has been made on it. The useful distinction here is mainly that between amateur or home-made tape recordings, from live performances, broadcasts, or disks, and commercially made and distributed tape recordings, duplicated from the master tapes which usually also serve as the master-sources of commercial disks.

And I for one object even more violently to the misuse of "binaural" for two-channel sound recordings which are not exclusively intended for reproduction through headphones. On the other hand, true stereophonic sound implies, for me at least, a minimum of three channels—which would leave the fast-growing two-channel home systems nameless, except for such circumlocutions as "quasi-stereophonic," if no acceptable substitute were available. Fortunately one is. And it boasts both the justification and the popularity of analogous photographic usage. Moreover it's as

Continued on next page



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crisp and catchy as "hi-fi" itself: stereo, which you may consider an abbreviation of stereophonic if you insist, but in any case serves admirably as a distinctive term for a mode of sound reproduction we're all going to have to reckon with, if not personally utilize, in the future.

I won't bother here with ignorant fears that tape recordings signal the early—or even eventual—doom of disks, or that stereo sound will make single-channel systems obsolete in any proximate future, since, the commercial success of the new types of recording and players can be ensured only by the substantial support of the present host of disk and broadcast listeners, not many of whom will entirely abandon their present cherished program materials and systems. The real "selling" point for tape and stereo is that they offer striking *extensions* of our present listening potentialities—extensions which many music lovers will not or cannot take advantage of, which some will concentrate on (unwisely, I feel) exclusively, but which many others will exploit, along with all the other available media, to the best of their ability.

For myself, I'm confident that disks will continue to supply a large part of my listening-for-pleasure, but I've already discovered that certain musical works and many "display" types of wide-range recording make an even more effective impact, and seem less susceptible to distractions and deteriorations, via tapes. I still won't claim that, given the best in disk surfaces and playback equipment, a good LP *can't* be reproduced as well as a 7.5-ips dual-track tape, but in actual practice I must frankly concede that it often seems *easier* to get continued optimum performance from tapes. Among the first releases sent me for review there are Phonotapes of two Vox recordings I happen to know exceedingly well in their earlier diskings: the Ravel program by Leibowitz, in which the *Alborado del gracioso* long served as one of my best transient-response test pieces, and the *Spotlight on Percussion*, which I have favored more recently for the same purpose. Yet now that I know the tapes, I find it increasingly irksome to tolerate the signs of wear that are becoming more and more distracting in my heavily played disk versions. I still claim that such surface deteriorations might have been avoided by more careful handling and cleaning, but the sad fact is that I just don't go to that trouble, and hence am particularly grateful for the easier handling (in this respect) of the tapes—as well as for their lowered inherent background noise and consequent broadened dynamic range.

Unfortunately, I'm not yet set up at home (although I expect soon to be) for adequate stereo reproduction, so I can't anticipate how I'll react to it after the close acquaintanceship that can be acquired only in familiar acoustical environments and over a considerable period of time. All I can say now is that while all of the early demonstrations of stereo left me lukewarm at best (in marked contrast to the fabulous effect of three-channel stereo-phony in the memorable Stokowski-Bell Laboratories concerts of long ago), I began to get much more sympathetically interested at the Ampex 612 unveiling last

summer and the Sonotape-Westminster demonstrations of Weinrich's Bach performances at the Audio Fair last fall. And more recently, when I was given an opportunity to "preview" RCA Victor's imposing six-item, all stereo April tape release, I heard—along with some passages which reawakened my old doubts—others which came close to sweeping me off my normally steady feet! The excerpts I heard then from Reiner's Bartók Concerto for Orchestra and Montoux's Tchaikovsky *Pathétique* literally made chills run up my spine in a way only my greatest moments in sonic experience ever have done before. I'm keeping my fingers crossed until I can test out all these tapes in my own living room, but if the best of them succeed even partially in duplicating their first truly sensational impact, my conversion to stereo sound is sure to be no less whole-hearted than it has been slow and reluctant. Maybe the old adage will have to be revised to: An old dog *can* be taught new tricks—it just takes longer and better teaching. . . .

"Coming Soon to This Theater!"

Anyway, I'm eagerly anticipating facing and reporting on my tape adventures, stereo and otherwise, in more specific detail in forthcoming columns. I had hoped to begin here with at least a few actual reviews, but time exigencies, the difficulties of setting up equipment and accurate equalization facilities, and the accumulation of review samples from a representative number of recorded-tape manufacturers—to say nothing of getting off my chest the foregoing confessions of a tyro tape enthusiast—have all conspired to delay matters. But happily a considerable variety of current tapes is promised to be on the way, and since at least several of the major manufacturers are now or shortly planning regular monthly, rather than sporadic, release schedules, the job of systematic reviewing should start getting under way next month.

It remains to be seen, of course, to what extent the present readership is genuinely interested in more extended tape news and reviews, and in my own uninhibitedly personal slants on them. Perhaps many audiophiles have shared my previous—and still not entirely expunged—dubity about the role recorded tape can, or will, play in our lives, obstinately proclaiming with Coleridge that our minds are "in a state of doubt as to . . . magnetism." But I hope I'll be able to communicate some of the electrifying fun I'm now enjoying in attempting to substantiate—or eliminate—such doubts once and for all.

At the very least, tape recordings and stereo sound are eminently newsworthy, in high vogue, and extravagantly promising. If they still have to establish irrefutable claim to more profound appeals, they deserve the fairest possible chance to translate their theoretical potentialities into practicable realities. Like Hamlet, we anxiously demand of tape—

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damnd?
Bring with thee airs from heaven or
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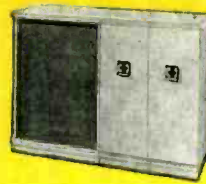
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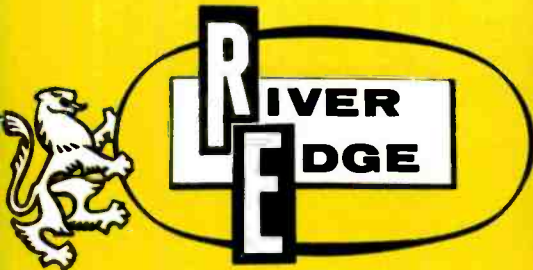
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TESTED IN THE HOME



Equipment reports appearing in this section are prepared by members of HIGH FIDELITY's staff, on the basis of actual use in conjunction with a home music system, and the resulting subjective evaluations of equipment are expressed as the opinions of the reviewer only. Reports are usually restricted to items of general interest, and no attempt is made to report on items that are obviously not designed primarily for high fidelity applications. Each report is sent to the manufacturer before publication; he is free to correct the specifications paragraph, to add a comment at the end of the report, or to request that it be deferred (pending changes in his product) or not be published. He may not, however, change the report. Failure of a new product to appear in TITH may mean either that it has not been submitted for review, or that it was submitted and was found to be unsatisfactory. These reports may not be quoted or reproduced, in part or in whole, for any purpose whatsoever, without written permission from the publisher.

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It now becomes necessary to discard the word "system" and find a new one. There have been speaker *systems* — matched enclosures and speakers. There have been amplifier *systems*. But this is the first integrated preamplifier-amplifier-speaker-enclosure system, of commercial manufacture that I have worked with. The results indicate that integration of this type may well be the next development that is just around the high fidelity corner. It seems to be a logical development.

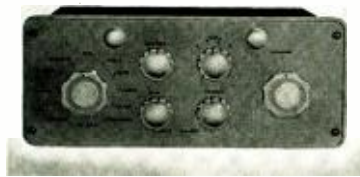
It is well established that, to cover the audible spectrum with optimum results, two or more speakers are necessary. Nowadays, one speaker will do surprisingly well, but two are better. Three are likely to be still better, and, theoretically at least, the more the merrier. Several manufacturers of speaker systems divide the audible range into four segments, so that each speaker can be optimized in a relatively narrow band of frequencies.

We can move a step closer to perfection if the enclosure is carefully matched to the speakers in such a multiple-speaker system. And still another step forward can be achieved by driving each speaker with a separate amplifier. Only in this way can the refinements of modern amplifiers be

passed on fully to the speakers; if a dividing network is inserted between an amplifier and two or more speakers (to divide the total range into two or more bands), some — and perhaps many — of the benefits of amplifier damping are lost. This whole matter was discussed some years ago in HIGH FIDELITY (November-December 1952 issue), when Roy Allison wrote about a bi-amplifier system.

The Sound Sales "system" is a tri-amplifier system. The speaker system is divided into three bands. Two 12-in. woofers carry the frequencies up to 250 cycles. A single, wide-range 12-in. unit covers from about 200 to about 12,000 cycles. An electrostatic tweeter (single-ended, phased variety) picks up at about 10,000 cps and goes on out to 25,000 cps or so.

The enclosure is maximized for these speakers in their respective ranges — and I mean maximized. The enclosure is small, compared to many now on the American market; the pair of 12-in. woofers can be expected to do well but not startlingly.



The Tri-Channel preamp-control unit.

This expectation is flat-footedly wrong: they do startlingly. Using an oscillator as a sound source, this system went smoothly and evenly right down to 30 cycles! The enclosure design is too complex to be discussed here; suffice it to say that both 12-inchers radiate directly but their rears are interconnected by a long, labyrinthine path which produces a push-pull effect.

The mid-range 12-in. unit is smooth and ample; on the bright side with considerable crispness and excellent projection. The tweeter is barely audible except in

the extreme high range where it adds a nice shimmer.

Now then, we have a speaker system consisting of four speakers arranged to cover three bands of frequencies, in an



The three-way speaker system section.

unusual and effective enclosure of relatively small size. To this is added a power amplifier specifically designed for this speaker system. There are three separate power amplifiers, on two chassis. A 30-watt unit (British rating) drives the woofers; another of 12 watts handles the frequencies from 200 to 12,000 cycles, and a tiny 1-watt amplifier (on the bigger chassis) drives the tweeter. And finally — integration — there is a special preamplifier-control unit, which looks normal at first glance — but isn't! The two big knobs are standard; the one at the left is input selection (with some novel variations), and the one at the right is a standard volume control (not loudness). The small one at the upper right in the center cluster appears on many British units: it is a sharp cut-off filter for the highs. But the other three, which look like tone controls, aren't — there aren't any tone controls. These three knobs are, in effect, input level controls for the three amplifiers. If they are turned fully counter-clockwise, there is no sound, regardless of the position of the main volume control. The one in

Continued on next page

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from preceding page

the lower right hand corner is marked TREBLE. Turn this clockwise, and the electrostatic tweeter comes in. Unlike a tone control, this does not make the response curve tip up or down, giving increasing highs as frequency increases. This control brings in the entire band of fre-



Two Chassis handle the three bands.

quencies handled by the tweeter—from 10,000 cps on up—with equal emphasis to all frequencies in that band.

Similarly, the small knob at the lower left (marked BASS) regulates the level of the sound to the amplifier which drives the two 12-in. woofers. Thus, if you turn this knob up part way, it will increase the loudness of a 50-cycle sound by, let's say, 40%. It will also increase the loudness of a 150-cycle sound by the same 40%. A tone control would raise the 50-cycle sound by, say, 80% while raising the 150-cycle sound only 40%. Tone controls may be said to have a tapering effect. These controls do not.

The last of the three controls, in the upper left corner of the cluster, is marked NORMAL and adjusts the level of the frequency band from 200 to 12,000 cycles. (Of course, the three bands blend together smoothly; there is no sharp demarcation as might be indicated by my use of specific frequencies. The crossovers are at about 200 and 11,000 cycles.)

And how does it sound? Highly listenable. As mentioned earlier, the bass is exceptional, considering the size of the cabinet and the fact that only two 12-in. woofers are used. Sound is brilliant and crisp, with plenty of presence, but the presence is not unpleasantly obtrusive and can be adjusted by the NORMAL control within a wide range. The electrostatic tweeter is sharp, but it can be cut out completely or adjusted to give the barest shimmer to brasses, etc. The sound has exceptional clarity and separation between instruments; this, I believe, is a direct result of utilizing the tri-amplifier approach, and is probably the outstanding benefit achieved by this method. The sound also has unusual breadth and body, due probably to several factors, including enclosure design. But some of it is probably due to the separate low-frequency amplifier. For example, as this is being written I am listening to a concerto for piano; the low piano notes, and the bass viols, have a distinctness from the rest of the orchestral sound—they do not merge with it and "mumble"—which is decidedly unusual.

Thus basically: I approve strongly of the idea, and the execution of the idea sounds fine.

I had to use so much space to describe the basic and unusual principles of this "system" that I can touch only briefly on the features of the preamplifier-control unit. It has a low-level, flat channel for high impedance microphone; two (or three) high-level channels, for radio, TV; the third is intended for playback from a tape recorder but can be used also for radio or other high level input. There is a single magnetic phono channel; by American standards, gain is not quite enough. The cartridge should have, according to the manufacturers, an output of about 20 millivolts. This is a bit higher than some popular units now on the market; a transformer is the answer.

The input selector knob has six positions of equalization, unfortunately (for us) marked in terms of British records. The instruction manual indicates which ones match the standard U. S. curves, but the basic instruction is probably wise: experiment for the sound you like best.

There is a tape output connection. This is inoperative on the phono and microphone channels; it is operative on the two high-level channels. The selector switch actually has two positions for each of the two high level (or radio) channels. One position, for each channel, activates the tape output connection; the other position kills the tape output.—Finally, one unusual feature of the input selector knob: it does not have a stop, so you can turn it round and round.

Miscellany: input connections are made by means of screw terminals of neat British design. My first reaction was strongly unfavorable—all my cables seem to have standard phono plugs on them—but then I realized it was much easier to attach a piece of shielded wire lead to a couple of screw terminals than to solder one of those phono tips. Power output connections are provided for operation of tuners, etc.; this is standard practice in England but rare in the U. S.

The unit I worked with was one of the first two to be imported to the United States; it did not include an AC on-off switch. Subsequent imported models will, I am told, have this switch on the master volume control. Hum, even with a magnetic cartridge plus transformer, was inaudible.

And a last word: this is an unusual system, all the way through. Expect unusual results, and be willing to fiddle with the three amplifier level controls, if I may call them that, for quite a while until you get a balance that suits you. Your inclination will be to treat them like tone controls. Remember that they behave in quite a different fashion. Pull the NORMAL control up to a good listening level, with the volume control two-thirds to three-quarters on. Then add body and fullness by bringing up the BASS control. Given just the right amount, sound is truly distinguished and impressive.—C. F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Your report is quite factual. You are quite correct in that the enclosure design is complex, but it does make possible the maximum performance of the speakers, and you may be sure that if better performance would have been attainable by employing larger sized units than the 12 in. dual suspension auditorium units, they would have been used. Although you

state smooth and even bass response down to 30 cps, laboratory reports have substantiated that we have reached as low as 20 cps, and our claim of 25 is felt conservative. It is possible with this system to obtain a quality of reproduction which we believe cannot be approached by any existing equipment or combination thereof presently being marketed.

Fisher 80-C Control Unit

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a self-powered preamplifier-mixer master audio control unit. **Inputs:** seven; three at high-level high-impedance; one for constant-amplitude phono; one for magnetic phono; one for microphone input; and one for tape recorder playback head. **Controls:** volume; loudness on-off; five channel-selector push buttons; five independent input channel level controls: bass turnover (AES, LP, RIAA-ORTHO, NAB); treble rolloff (FLAT, AES, RIAA-ORTHO, LP-NAB); bass (± 15 db at 50 cps); treble (± 15 db at 10,000 cps). **Outputs:** two cathode followers. One to main amplifier, one to tape recorder. **Response:** ± 0.25 db from 20 to 20,000 cps; ± 2 db from 10 to 100,000 cps. **Distortion** (intermodulation): unmeasurable up to 5 volts output; 0.2% at 10 volts; 0.65% at 15 volts. **Dimensions:** 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide by 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. deep by 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high. **Tubes:** 3—12AX7, 12AU7. **Price:** chassis only, \$99.50; blonde or mahogany cabinet, \$9.95 extra. **MANUFACTURER:** Fisher Radio Corp., 21-25 44th Drive, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

Someone certainly did some daydreaming here . . . and then built the dream. This is quite a preamp! Don't really know where to begin. Let's start on the front panel. There are the usual separate tone controls for bass and treble—the concentric knobs at the right. There is a volume control which combines on-off for line current and a loudness on-off knob. Then there are two lever switches, like those which have appeared on earlier Fisher preamp-control units. These provide four positions each of bass and of treble equalization. At the bottom of the throw of each lever is a position labeled TAPE. More about this in a minute.

In the center of the panel are five small level control knobs, five pushbuttons, and



The 80-C mixer-preamp-control unit.

five pilot lights. The pushbuttons select input channels; the lights indicate the channel or channels selected. The level controls operate in a double fashion: they adjust the level into the input channel but, since you can push two or more buttons at once and thereby select two or more inputs, the level control knobs also serve the purpose of mixers. For example: suppose you are tape recording and want to mix voice with music. Put on an appropriate record; turn both MIC and PHONO level controls off. Push down both corresponding channel selector buttons. Now, with the tape recorder running, you bring up the music, let it play, fade it down and bring in the voice. You can blend them together at any desired level by adjustment of these level-mixer controls. Slick idea;

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The Debussy (above). Cobra-Matic® Record Changer plays all speeds from 10 to 85 RPM, including the 16 2/3 "Talking Book" speed. Heavy duty 4-pole motor for smoother performance. 3 extra-

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Fully variable speed regulator permits you to play any speed from 10 to 85 RPM and to correct turntable error.



Built-in stroboscope speedometer shows when turntable is turning at record's exact recorded speed.

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one which the tape recorder enthusiasts will definitely like.

Another worthwhile "tape" feature on this unit is the tape playback position on the two equalization controls. When these levers are pulled down to their bottom positions, the phono channel is cut out and the tape playback channel is cut in. As everyone knows, tape requires equalization. Some of the equalization is accomplished in the record phase, some in the playback phase. This preamp is so arranged that you can connect direct from the playback head¹ to the tape input jack on the back of the chassis, and secure this equalization. This means that if you are interested only in playing back tape, you need to purchase only a tape transport mechanism. With the increasing availability of pre-recorded tapes, more and more people want playback equalization only; with this preamp, they do not need to pay extra for electronic components supplied with most tape recorders to provide record and playback equalization.

The playback equalization built into the 80-C consists mostly of bass boost, and is said to be that required by NARTB standards. These standards apply to 15 ips tapes; at the time of writing this report, no playback standard had been set for 7½ ips tapes. Many pre-recorded tapes will play back properly through the Fisher; some will sound a little thin in the bass end, but this can be rectified to a certain extent by adjusting the bass tone control.²

Now to the back of the chassis. To begin with, there are three AC convenience outlets. All three are controlled by the master on-off-volume knob on the front panel. One is for the amplifier. The other two outlets are additionally switched by the pushbutton channel selectors. For example, one is labeled TUNER. This AC outlet does not go on unless the tuner pushbutton on the front panel is depressed. This is another excellent idea; I have always thought it wasteful to have a tuner burning up electricity, tubes, and components while playing the phonograph, yet that is the way most of the convenience outlets on preamp-control units operate. The third AC outlet is tied in to the AUX 1 pushbutton.

Then there are nine standard jacks. Two are for outputs; one of these is for the amplifier and one for connection to a tape recorder. The latter is not affected by volume or tone controls. Both are cathode follower outputs. For this reason, the length of cable attached to them is not important.

There is a TAPE channel, which is for the playback head lead, as discussed earlier. There are two phono inputs, one for magnetic cartridges and the other for constant amplitude units such as ceramics, crystals, and FM cartridges. These two inputs cannot be used simultaneously, since there is only one basic phono channel.

The magnetic phono channel has a 47,000 ohm load; cartridges requiring other loads than this will operate best if the internal resistor is changed or if one is added

outside the preamp to bring the load to the correct amount.³

I bring up these points because the 80-C is unusually free of distortion, but improper connection of input devices could bring about distortion or incorrect equalization, which would not be the fault of the 80-C. The sound output of the Fisher unit is superlative. Definition on complex orchestral passages is unusually good and there is a solid, brilliant feel to it.

All in all — and at a price of \$99.50 — this is (to put it colloquially) quite a piece of goods! — C. F.

¹See "Manufacturer's Comment."

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: (1) The characteristics of the tape equalization network were arrived at by having it match the majority of currently available pre-recorded tapes.

(2) Operating and Installation Instructions supplied with the 80-C describe the correct resistor to be used with each of the major makes of cartridges.

Fenton Perpetuum-Ebner Rex Changer

DESCRIPTION: a three-speed record changer which plays 10 records of any size from 6 to 12 in., intermixed and in any sequence. Speeds: 33.3, 45, 78 rpm. AC supply: 110/125 or 220/240 volts, selectable by switch; and 50 or 60 cycles, using different drive pulleys. Dimensions (with 12-in. record on turntable): 13½ in. wide by 11 7/8 deep, over-all. 5½ in. required from motor board to top of spindle. 3 in. required from top surface of motor board to bottom of changer mechanism. Price: \$59.50. DISTRIBUTOR: The Fenton Co., 15 Moore Street, New York 4, N. Y.

This is one of the most unusual record changers I've examined for some time, and I must say I was impressed with a few of its features.

Probably the most remarkable thing about it is its simplicity. Considering what it can do, it has very few moving parts, and none of them looks as if it would get out of order with normal use.

The changer can be loaded with a stack of up to ten records, in any mixture of sizes, and the pile is then topped with a heavy, dish-shaped weight which holds the records level. To start the mechanism, you slide a lever beside the pickup arm toward the rear of the changer until the turntable has made two revolutions, and then it goes into action.

First the pickup arm lifts from its rest, and the bottom record on the stack drops about a half-inch down the spindle and hangs there at an angle, with the edge of the disk that is toward the pickup hanging about four inches above the turntable. The pickup then moves inward until it meets the edge of the half-dropped record, and then the record drops onto the turntable, leaving the pickup arm suspended where it came to rest at the edge of the disk. Next, the arm moves inward about 5/8 of an inch to put the stylus just a little farther toward the center than was the edge of the arm, and it is lowered squarely into the record's lead-in groove. It doesn't matter what size the record is; the pickup unerringly sets down in the lead-in groove.

This arrangement will even work with odd-sized pre-electric recordings, most of which lack lead-in grooves. The inward pull that always exists to some extent when a stylus rides a record is sufficient to pull the pickup into the first groove.

The arm is very free-moving, and since it does not begin to activate the trip me-

chanism until it is well into the final run-in groove, friction against the groove walls is kept at an absolute minimum at all times. The changer will trip on any type of run-in groove, be it a slow spiral or an eccentric ring groove, and even if there is no run-in at all, the inward pull that was mentioned before will run the arm far enough after the last groove to trip the mechanism. The friction-clutch that drives the arm will slip freely if the arm is held or twisted while the changer is in cycle, so the likelihood of the changer becoming jammed through misuse is practically negligible.

After the entire stack has played through, the pickup returns to its arm rest, depressing a switch and shutting off the mechanism.

The other two controls on the changer panel are for speed change (which can be effected while the unit is running), and a sort of a tone control to provide three treble rolloff positions from a crystal or ceramic cartridge. This tone control, which is located at the left front corner of the changer's base, will not work with a magnetic pickup (which has its own rolloff provisions in the external preamplifier). If a magnetic cartridge is used, the control should be set in the full clockwise position. This setting cuts out the resistor and capacitors from the pickup's output circuit.

The drop mechanism in the Fenton changer is built into the center spindle, which can be easily removed and replaced with a short spindle for manual playing. When so used, the arm is placed onto the disk by hand, but when the side is finished it returns to its rest as usual and shuts off the unit. A nice feature about the trip mechanism, though, is that even while it remains effective in the Manual play mode, it will not trip when you try to play a band



The Rex changer on its integral base.

near the inside of the recorded area. It trips only in the standard run-in area.

The automatic spindle has a slot cut into it to take the long moving levers which drop the disks.

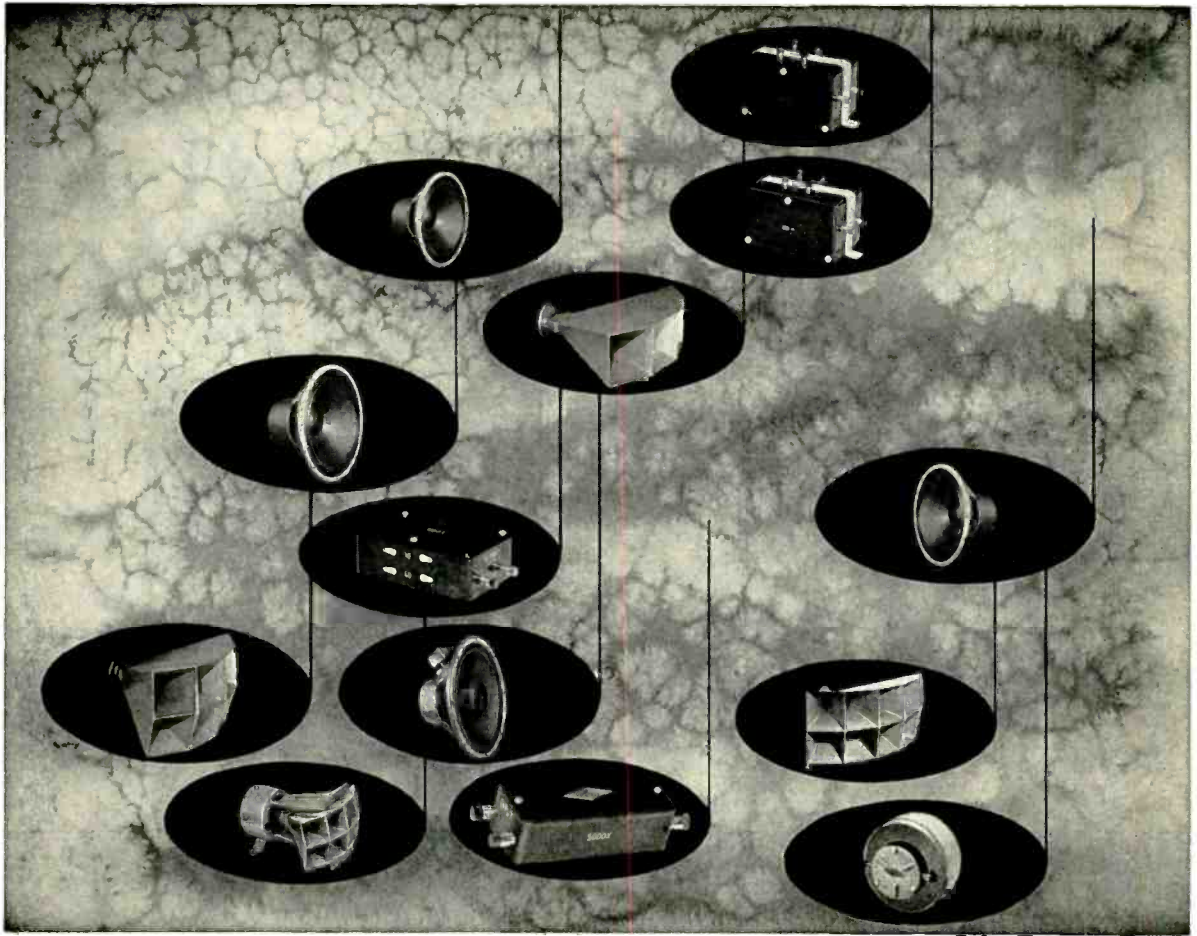
Speed regulation is very good, and rumble is quite low. This may be largely due to the fact that, according to the manufacturer, the spring suspension between each unit and its integral base frame is adjusted to remove its resonance from the frequency of the motor vibration. In its Off position, the idler is left in light contact with the drive pulley, but I doubt that the slight spring tension exerted would be enough to cause flats on the idler tire.

All in all, a really ingenious unit which should find wide application where a good, dependable changer is needed to play a variety of old and new recordings. — J. G. H.

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¹These leads should be kept as short as possible.

²See "Manufacturer's Comment."



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Heath SS-1 Loudspeaker Kit

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a two-way loudspeaker system supplied in complete kit form. Frequency response: ± 5 db, 50 to 12,000 cycles. Crossover: 1,600 cycles. Power rating: 25 watts program, 15 watts continuous. Nominal impedance: 16 ohms. Cabinet: ducted-port bass reflex. Speakers: specially-designed Jensen 8-inch woofer and compression-horn tweeter. Tweeter level control at rear of enclosure. Dimensions: 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high by 23 wide by 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ deep. Price: \$39.95. **MANUFACTURER:** The Heath Company, Benton Harbor, Mich.

To anyone who dislikes woodworking as much as I do, this kit was a very pleasant surprise. The Heath Speaker kit eliminates all demands on one's manual dexterity, arriving on the user's bench already pre-cut, pre-sanded, and pre-drilled.

The first thing I noticed on unpacking the SS-1 speaker kit was that all the small parts (with the exception of screws, staples, and other assorted bits of small hardware) were wrapped in Kimsul, which is ideal material for acoustic padding in speaker cabinets. I was surprised then to find no mention in the instruction manual about installing the padding, so I omitted it for the first series of listening tests.

As with all the other Heathkits I've encountered in the past, this one was easy and straightforward in construction, and came supplied with the usual step-by-step instruction manual that leaves little room for error or misunderstanding.

The whole job took me about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, from the sealed carton to the completed speaker system. But since I didn't paint it or attempt to add any additional finishing, the estimated total time involved in its construction by the average hobbyist might run between five and twelve hours (depending upon what kind of finish he wanted). The only problem I ran into was in mounting the small strip of plywood that supports an internal shelf in the cabinet. This strip is supposed to take four screws into its edges, and the piece I was supplied with must have been poorly bonded, as it simply split apart when the third screw was tightened. Small bother, though . . . the strip was easily replaced by one of the same size from my scrap pile.

The speakers that go into this small cabinet are, according to the descriptive literature, specially-designed Jensen units, and while it still isn't quite clear to me what special design considerations went into them, it is audibly clear that they are really excellent driver units. Initial listening tests on the SS-1 were conducted using tape as the signal source, and the first thing that became evident was that this system is *very* nicely balanced. With the tweeter level control (located at the rear of the enclosure) adjusted for what seemed to me like optimum balance, the high end was quite smooth and wide-range, but the middle and low-frequency ranges were definitely disturbing. A spot check with an audio oscillator showed at least three bad peaks in the middle range, and the low end had a definite wooden coloration.

Adding the Kimsul padding that came with the kit was all that was required to

clear up both of these difficulties. All of the Kimsul was used, being stapled to all the large exposed inner surfaces of the cabinet. There were enough staples supplied (for attaching the grille cloth) that after the cloth was attached there were plenty left over for the internal padding, which was applied in $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thicknesses.

The improvement in sound was rather remarkable. The SS-1 now covered the major part of the audible spectrum with surprising smoothness, and the two sources of sound (the tweeter is located about eight inches to one side of the woofer) blended together quite well. At listening distances of over three feet there was no detectable tendency for the sound source to "shift" from one side to the other as the frequency of sound changed. The Jensen driver units match each other very well, with the result that the over-all sound has a remarkable quality of "openness" which I haven't heard from many very large speaker systems.

The thing that impressed me the most about this little system was that, even with the tweeter's level control turned up full, there was very little tendency toward shrill-



The completed Heath SS-1 speaker kit.

ness. The SS-1 was apparently designed to have no "presence peak," and I must say I like it this way.

Smoothness in the high-frequency range is quite good, very much better, in fact, than I had come to expect from most compression-type tweeters. Audible "fuzziness" when playing worn LP records was quite low, which verifies the impression of smoothness that the tweeter gives from ultra-clean program material.

The low end, of course, is no match for a large horn-loaded or multiple-woofer installation, but is quite good enough when the speaker operates from a corner of the room to give the sound a comfortable amount of body and solidity.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this speaker is not capable of matching the performance capabilities of the Heath-kit amplifiers, but for a little short of \$40 and a few hours of construction the SS-1 offers performance that is going to be very hard to match. — J. G. H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We carefully considered the problem of adding acoustic padding inside the SS-1 enclosure. A series of listening tests by a small group of high-fidelity enthusiasts was run. All types of program material were used. The results showed no definite preference for either the padded or unpadded version, although there is a definite difference in sound, as pointed out. In cases like this, Heath Company relies on sound pressure measurements and picks the condition which appears more desirable. This was done in the SS-1 design. One of the advantages in building high-fidelity equipment in kit form is that the constructor has very little fear about modifying his equipment, since he is completely aware of what makes it "tick." We are happy that in this

case we had accidentally furnished the materials used. And, because we respect the judgment of the reviewer, we will carefully recheck our measurements again — we could be wrong.

Axiom Enclosures

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a series of specially-designed loudspeaker enclosures for one, two, or four speakers. The model 180 uses a single Axiom 80; the 280, two Axiom 80s; the 480, four Axiom 80s; and the 172 accommodates any good 12-in. speaker but is designed for the Axiom 22. All four models incorporate the resistance slots developed by Goodmans Industries, Ltd., manufacturers of the Axiom line of speakers and enclosures. Dimensions (width, height, depth, respectively): Model 180, 23 7/8 in. by 16 by 18; Model 280, 32 in. by 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 20; Model 480, 35 7/8 in. by 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 24; Model 172, 32 in. by 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 20. Prices: Model 180, \$66.00; Model 280, \$85.50; Model 480, \$93.00; Model 172, \$85.50. **SALES AGENT FOR U. S.:** Rockbar Corp., 215 East 37th St., New York 16, N. Y.

This is one of the most difficult TITH reports I have ever undertaken; if someone had wanted to conjure up the ideal TITH-er's nightmare, it couldn't have been much worse! Problem is, I had four speaker enclosures to listen to; enclosures and speakers were by the same manufacturer; all cabinets were of identical design; two were of the same size; three of them used identical speakers. For the past several hours I have been switching back and forth among the four systems, noting differences and trying to think of descriptive adjectives.

The basic difference seems to be not in the enclosures but in the speakers. The Axiom 80 is more brilliant than the Axiom 22. Its low-middle and bass sound is more subdued, relative to the middle highs, than the 22; hence, from the 80s in their three enclosures, you get a feeling of greater presence and immediacy to the sound, and a stronger sense of projection out of the cabinet and into the room. The 22 gives a richer sound, more mellow at first listening but, in mid-wall locations, better balanced. Put the 22 into a corner, and bass becomes almost too heavy, whereas the 80 series balance out rather nicely and the differences between the one, two, and four-speaker systems become apparent. If power levels are maintained, the bass fills out as more speakers are employed.

One would expect that the bass on the four-80s system would be substantially



The Axiom 480 four-speaker enclosure.

better than with the single 80. It is better; but the four-80s system (these are 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. units) does not appear to have the fullness of the single, 12-in. Axiom 22 system. This is contrary to what one would expect,

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TESTED IN THE HOME

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and contrary to theory; I'm not sure why it happens, but it does — in my test set-up. It is possible that it is an illusion; the bass may be substantially better but so are the middles and highs, so that the relative balance throughout the frequency spectrum is maintained. If these were strictly woofers, with a falling high-end characteristic, the improvement in low-end response would probably be more noticeable.

My personal taste in reproduced sound would be best suited by the model 172 with the single 12-in. Axiom 22. Those who like a bit more presence would probably choose one of the systems utilizing the Axiom 80s. Which one of the three is likely to depend on room acoustics and where in the room the enclosure can be placed.

All four systems are smooth, and bass by aural test is good to 45 to 75 cycles, depending on the system.

A word about the design of the cabinets: they are unusual. They're nicely styled, but more interesting are the "slots." At first glance the cabinets appear to be bass reflexes, with the port on the bottom, facing the floor. Further study of the bottom panel reveals the "slots" . . . a series of slots about 1/16th-in. wide and 10 to 15 inches long. The total area devoted to port and to slots (slits might be a better word) varies, depending on the speaker(s). For example, a design sheet which Goodmans publishes says that for a 12-in. speaker such as their Axiom 22, port area should be 16 sq. in. \pm 10%, and total slit area should be 18 sq. in. Because making these slits is a rather tricky problem, Goodmans makes available rectangular panels which combine port and slit functions, so that all you have to do is to slip one of these panels into a correctly sized opening in the cabinet.

The effect of the slits is to smooth out bass response where most bass reflex cabinets deliver their double peaks. Critical designers of bass reflex enclosures will tell you that in addition to careful port tuning, you must also add layers of grille cloth across the speaker opening until optimum reduction of peak heights is obtained; the slits perform a similar function. The frequency of the peak is lowered; furthermore the volume of the enclosure can be reduced to about two-thirds that of a comparable bass-reflex one without slits.

Well, that's about the best I can do with a very difficult subject! All in all, these make a nice series of enclosures (very sturdily built, by the way) with good sound from all of them. As I said, my pet of the four is the 172 with the Axiom 22. — C. F.

The Dynakit Mark II Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a complete 50-watt power amplifier kit. **Input:** high-level, high-impedance. **Controls:** AC power; output tube bias adjust. **Power output:** 50 watts continuous; 100 watts peak. **1M distortion:** less than 1.0 per cent at 50 watts output. **Frequency response:** \pm 0.5 db, 6 to 60,000 cycles. **Power response:** \pm 0.1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles at any level up to 50 watts. **Square wave response:** 20 to 20,000 cycles, essen-

tially undistorted. **Sensitivity:** 1.5 volts required for 50 watts output. **Damping factor:** 15. **Output impedances:** 8 and 16 ohms. **Preampifier power takeoff socket.** Provision for remote on-off switching. **Tubes:** 7, 6CA7, EL34, 6AN6, 5U4GB. (6550 tubes can be used in output stage without circuit changes.) **Dimensions:** 9 in. wide by 9 deep by 6 1/2 high. **Price:** \$69.75. **MANUFACTURER:** The Dyna Company, 5142 Master St., Philadelphia 31, Pa.

I have been tempted of late to wonder just how far amplifier design can go before there is no longer any room for improvement. Each time I've run across an amplifier that prompted me to say "This is it," another one has come along that was just



Bottom view shows completed wiring.

a little bit better in one respect or another.

The recent crop of top-quality amplifiers has, in many cases, left little room for such improvement, with distortion levels that our modest test equipment was unable to measure, almost perfect reproduction of square waves, power response curves that look like frequency response curves, and frequency response curves that can be accurately drawn with a straight-edge. And in most cases the sound has been correspondingly excellent.

But perfection generally costs money, which is one reason why many hi-fi enthusiasts have had to settle for something a little less than the best. The Dynakit, though, may well change the picture, provided one is willing and able to undertake the assembly of a kit. The Dynakit offers to anyone with a yen to do-it-himself 50 watts of very clean audio at a cost of a little less than \$1.40 per active watt, plus a few hours over a workbench. And "a few hours" is no understatement, either. The Dynakit comes supplied with a pre-wired, pre-soldered printed circuit board that mounts the first tube and a great majority of the amplifier's circuitry. About all there is left to do is to assemble the major components and a few sockets and bits of hardware, and connect them into the circuit. The whole job took me a little less than 2 3/4 hours from the sealed carton to the finished product, and I'm not a very fast worker at that.

The only difficulty I ran into was starting the nuts that mount the AC switch, which is tucked under the fold at the bottom of the chassis. In subsequent models of the Dynakit, though, I have been informed that this minor kink has been ironed out by reorienting the switch to allow more room to get at the mounting flanges.

The step-by-step instructions and pictorial diagrams are very clear and straight-

forward, leaving no room for misunderstanding. They are accurate down to the last detail, and my completed unit worked properly the first time it was tried.

None of the tubes in the Dynakit requires matching, and the only adjustment that is needed before the amplifier is put into use is setting the output tube bias control to the recommended 35 volts. This adjustment requires a vacuum-tube or high-resistance voltmeter, which can be borrowed from a trusting local radio dealer if you don't happen to own one. Otherwise, the amplifier could be taken to him with a request to set the bias voltage as specified.

Before I prepared this report, I used the amplifier for about 80 hours, which is quite enough time for it to deteriorate if it is going to do so, and its performance at this time was found to meet the manufacturer's original specifications. So in terms of deterioration with use, I found no evidence to support the idea that this is a "critically-adjusted" amplifier.

Further instrument tests failed to show, as far as I could determine, any aspect of the Dynakit's performance that might be significantly improved, and its sound reflects these findings.

It is difficult to describe the sound of a top-quality amplifier; the best I can do is say that the Dynakit seems to have no sound of its own. It is not "smooth," "mellow," "crisp," or "brilliant," but is rather completely uncolored, as an ideal amplifier should be. It reproduces music with an effortless cleanliness and naturalness that can best be described in terms of the original sounds. There is no sense of strain or "pushing" on high-volume musical passages, and the over-all sound at all volume levels has a really remarkable transparency and solidity about it.

Kit or no kit, this is very definitely in the top of the pile as far as amplifiers



The Dynakit with its cover removed.

go. Its design simplicity and high-quality components look as if they would contribute to a long, dependable life, and at the price it sells for, there is no reason why every music listener who knows how to solder two wires together can't afford to own a top-quality amplifier. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We are pleased to note that HIGH FIDELITY'S bench tests were made after 80 hours use of the Dynakit. We hope that this policy will be followed generally in checking equipment, since it gives a better representation of what the customer can expect in home use than do data based on initial peak performance.

After two years in the laboratory, the JBL Signature Model 075 High Frequency Precision Transducer has been perfected and is now ready for release. The organization which has advanced the art of high fidelity music reproduction with such innovations as the Koustical Lens and The Hartfield, now introduces the Ring Radiator. In the 075, a ring radiates sound energy into the annular throat of an exponentially-tapered, solid aluminum horn. When you add the JBL Signature 075 to your system, you get brilliant, distortion-free, smooth response from 2500 cps on up. The further advantages of the ring radiator are discussed in detail in Bulletin SB1003HF. For your free copy write to James B. Lansing Sound, Inc., 2439 Fletcher Drive, Los Angeles 39, California.

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THE HIGH FIDELITY READER: edited by Roy H. Hoopes, Jr. Introduction by John M. Conly. An anthology of outstanding articles originally appearing in **HIGH FIDELITY Magazine** covering various aspects of the high fidelity phenomenon. Among the contributors are Charles Fowler, Roy Allison, Fernando Valenti, Peter Bartok, Emory Cook, and David Sarsar.

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SUMMER MUSIC

Continued from page 41

and Karl Schuricht will be among those conducting and Monique Haas and Wilhelm Kempff among the soloists (June 29 - July 15). Another concert of special flavor will be given in the famous baroque basilica of Ottobeuren in the Bavarian Allgaeu mountains by the orchestra and choir of the Bavarian Broadcasting Company, on July 10. That same evening, a Mozart serenade will be played by the Koeckert Quartet in the Imperial Hall of the abbey. Augsburg, the medieval city from which Mozart's father's family came, is also holding festive concerts throughout the whole of the year. Much Mozart will be played, together with (July 28 - August 12) special performances of Italian opera. Among the other more important German festivals are those in Wiesbaden (May 1 - 28) at which opera companies of Vienna, Rome, Belgrade, and Stockholm will appear; in Wuerzburg (June 9 - 23) at which Eugen Jochum will conduct music of Mozart; Bayreuth (May 29 - June 3) also devoted mainly to Mozart, and in the same town (July 24 - August 25) the annual celebration of the music of Richard Wagner; and Munich (August 10 - September 9) at which *Lohengrin*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Egyptian Helen* by Richard Strauss, and Handel's *Julius Caesar* will be performed as part of the Bavarian State Opera Festival. July 25 - August 1 will be Bach week at Ansbach. Menuhin and Kirkpatrick will appear as soloists. For the tourist in search of pastoral atmosphere and lighter musical fare, from June 30 to September 16 at Coblenz is held an operetta festival on a floating stage in the Rhine.

In Austria music is an integral part of life in every village and hamlet, and here are mentioned only those festivals which have acquired an international reputation. Of these the Festival of Vienna is held earliest in the summer (June 2 - 24). Mozart of course will dominate proceedings, with performances of *Don Giovanni*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and the Requiem. The Berlin Philharmonic, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and the Phil-

Continued on page 116

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SUMMER MUSIC

Continued from page 114

harmonic Orchestra of Leningrad all are expected to participate; and Van Beinum, Böhm, Cantelli, and Von Karajan—among other conductors—will appear on the podium. As most Americans know from their daily papers, the State Opera and the Burgtheater—both located on Vienna's Ring—have both been rebuilt and are reopened.

The Bregenz Festival (July 19 - August 15) will present Carl Millöcker's operetta *Der Bettelstudent*, conducted by Anton Paulik, and Otto Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Both performances will be given by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin State Opera Ballet, and the Bregenz Festival Choir. Wilma Lipp, Hilde Roessl-Majdan, and Franz Boehm will appear among the soloists. The Amsterdam Oratorio Choir will present a performance of *The Damnation of Faust*, with Piet van Egmond as conductor. Among the orchestral concerts planned will be a cycle of Mozart, with Georg Solti conducting; of Wagner, under Ferdinand Leitner;

and of Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky under Heinrich Hollreiser.

The Salzburg Festival (July 21 - August 30) will of course center on the music of Mozart—including productions of *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, *Idomeneo*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *Il Seraglio*. Lieder recitals and concerts of chamber music, church music, and orchestral works will also be given. Among those appearing on the podium will be Karl Böhm, Eugene Ormandy, Bernhard Paumgartner, and Bruno Walter.

Switzerland's Mozart Festival has been designed to coincide with Geneva's traditional Rose Weeks, June 18 - 30. Earlier in the season (June 1 - 2) Hans Munch will conduct the Mass in C minor at the Cathedral in Basel. Until June 7, Lugano will hold its annual "Musical Thursdays" with concerts under distinguished conductors. Braunwald (July 10 - 20), Engadine (mid-July - mid-August), and Lucerne (August 15 - September 8) will all hold musical festival weeks. And for those whose musical taste is catholic, let there be noted also that from June 2 - 4 there will be a cantonal song festival.

Continued on page 118

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2 Heathkit 25-Watt HIGH FIDELITY AMPLIFIER KIT

Features a new-design Peerless output transformer and KT66 output tubes. Frequency response within ± 1 db from 5 cps to 160 Kc at 1 watt. Harmonic distortion only 1% at 25 watts, 20-20,000 cps. IM distortion only 1% at 20 watts, 4, 8, or 16 ohms output. Hum and noise, 99 db below rated output. Uses 2-12AU7's, 2-KT66's and 5R4GY. Attractive physical appearance harmonizes with WA-P2 Preamplifier. Kit combinations:

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W-5 COMBINATION AMPLIFIER KIT: Consists of W-5M amplifier kit plus Heathkit Model WA-P2 Preamplifier kit. Shpg. Wt. 38 Lbs. Express only. **\$79.50**

3 Heathkit HIGH FIDELITY PREAMPLIFIER KIT

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MODEL WA-P2
\$19.75
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4 Heathkit Williamson Type HIGH FIDELITY AMPLIFIER KIT

This amplifier employs the famous Acrosound TO-300 "Ultra Linear" output transformer, and has a frequency response within ± 1 db from 6 cps to 150 Kc at 1 watt. Harmonic distortion only 1% at 21 watts. IM distortion at 20 watts only 1.3%. Power output 20 watts, 4, 8, or 16 ohms output. Hum and noise, 88 db below 20 watts. Uses 2-6SN7's, 2-5881's and 5V4G. Kit combinations:

W-3M AMPLIFIER KIT: Consists of main amplifier and power supply for separate chassis construction. Shpg. Wt. 29 lbs. Express only. **\$49.75**

W-3 COMBINATION AMPLIFIER KIT: Consists of W-3M amplifier kit plus Heathkit Model WA-P2 Preamplifier kit. Shpg. Wt. 37 lbs. Express only. **\$69.50**

5 Heathkit Williamson Type HIGH FIDELITY AMPLIFIER KIT

This is the lowest price Williamson type amplifier ever offered in kit form, and yet it retains all the usual Williamson features. Employs Chicago output transformer. Frequency response, within ± 1 db from 10 cps to 100 Kc at 1 watt. Harmonic distortion only 1.5% at 20 watts. IM distortion at rated output 2.7%. Power output 20 watts, 4, 8, or 16 ohms output. Hum and noise, 95 db below 20 watts, uses 2-6SN7's, 2-5881's, and 5V4G. An exceptional dollar value by any standard. Kit combinations:

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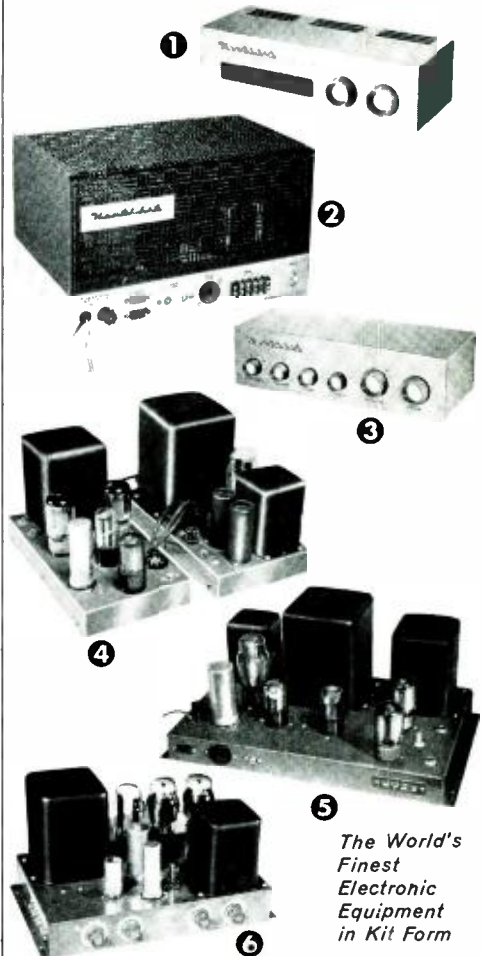
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6 Heathkit 20-Watt HIGH FIDELITY AMPLIFIER KIT

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SUMMER MUSIC

Continued from page 116

THE LOW COUNTRIES

Brussels, capital of Belgium, will play host from April 25 to June 1 to the Queen Elizabeth International Musical Competition, to which composers of all nationalities and ages are invited to submit piano works—and perform them. An international jury will choose twelve winners.

In the Netherlands from June 15 to July 15 is held the Holland Festival at Amsterdam, The Hague, and Scheveningen, the famous resort near the capital. Features will include performances of four operas from four countries, each performed in the original language: Verdi's *Falstaff*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, *Sampiero Corso* by Henri Tomasi, and *Peter Grimes* by Benjamin Britten. Orchestral concerts will be given by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Van Beinum, Dorati, and Von Klemperer and by the Czech Philharmony (Prague) under Karel Ančerl, among others. The visitor will also be able to hear choral works of Bach and Monteverdi by the Netherlands Bach Society under the direction of Anthon van der Horst, the latter performed in Naarden Cathedral and St. John's Cathedral, Gouda. Performances of chamber music, drama, and ballet are also planned.

THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

Almost anywhere one travels in France this season one will find festivals of music and drama, often distinguished by the beautiful and dramatic *mises en scène* provided for them. For instance, from the end of May through the first week in July at Sceaux, on the outskirts of Paris, "musical nights" will be held in a setting which was designed by the famous park planner Le Nôtre and which in the seventeenth century, was the particular pleasure ground of the Duchesse du Maine and her "Court." This year the concerts will be devoted mainly to French classical and contemporary music. At Lyons-Charbonnières from mid-June to the end of the month concerts, plays, and dancing take place alternatively on the stage of the Charbonnières Casino, on the open space in front of the Cathedral, or in the remarkable setting of the Roman

Continued on page 120

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Uses pre-assembled printed circuit board and simple physical arrangement. Only 9" x 9" x 5-3/4" high without sacrifice of performance, and can be assembled in 3 hours.

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Model KEN-12—Similar to Model KEN-15 except that mounting board is pre-cut for all 12" speakers. Also for most of the popular 2 or 3 way P.S.E. combinations. Completed enclosure measures 30" H x 21 1/2" W x 13 1/2" D. Model KEN-12—Net Price \$39.75.

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SUMMER MUSIC

Continued from page 118

theaters of Fourvières. Strasbourg will present music by Mozart (June 8-23) in its cathedral of pink sandstone or in the eighteenth-century Chateau des Rohan. Throughout the summer, concerts of chamber music are presented on Friday evenings in the Italian room of the Museum, adjoining the magnificent Cathedral. At Toulon, concerts are given during the latter part of July at the Tour Royale, a sixteenth-century fortress. At Aix-en-Provence is to be held probably the most formal of the French musical festivals, from July 7 to August 2. Five operas will be given including Menotti's *The Telephone* and Ramcau's *Platée*; a number of orchestral concerts including performances by the Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire under the direction of Jacques Pernod and Hans Rosbaud; chamber music performances by I Musici and the Quartetto Italiano; and recitals by Teresa Stich-Randall, Ida Presti, and Alexandre Goya.

In Greece, from June to October, open-air symphony concerts are presented in the Odeon of Herodes Atticus at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens.

In Italy, each major city presents its share of music. Here are mentioned only some of the more conspicuous programs of summer music. In Florence, May 2-June 30 comprises the XIX May Music Festival. During the entire month of August, in addition, symphonic concerts are presented in the Cloister of Santa Croce. At Milan, may be heard (May 1 - June 30) an Italian Mozart celebration. In Naples during both July and August, open air opera may be heard at Campi Flegrei. At Ravello (June 15-30) Wagnerian concerts are presented at the Villa Rufolo. During July and August in Rome, open air opera graces the Baths of Caracalla and the open air summer concert season holds sway at the Basilica of Maxentius. And in Verona from July 15 - August 15 will be held the thirty-fourth season of open air opera in the ancient Roman arena. During the first half of May in Taormina there will be concerts and classical dances at the Greek Theater.

Spain will hold its Fifth Interna-

Continued on page 123



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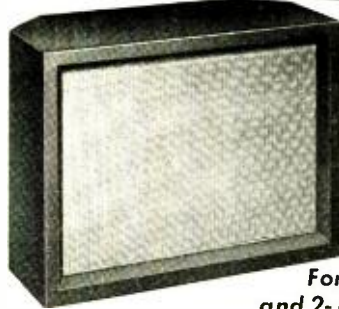
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SUMMER MUSIC

Continued from page 120

tional Music and Dance Festival this year in Granada (June 20 - July 3). Concerts will be given in the gardens of the Alhambra and in the adjacent open-air oval-shaped theater of the Palace of Charles V (which, incidentally, offers—in addition to good acoustics and seating for several thousand—a magnificent view of the surrounding mountains). While at this writing, plans are indefinite for specific programs, it is expected that Yehudi Menuhin, Walter Gieseking, Hilda Gueden, and the guitarist Andres Segovia will be among the soloists participating.



GLYNDEBOURNE

Continued from page 39

Conqueror. Thence, four miles to Glyndebourne with time for a stroll in the magnificent gardens, generous of space and color. By five thirty, when it is time for the opera, the world bears no resemblance to that familiar turmoil of shifting compromise between past and future . . . it has become, in these country surroundings, a lovely place where time stands still. No need, later, to hurry over dinner. A long interval is provided, and two restaurants, Over Wallop and Middle Wallop. Moments also for musing on past productions—operas otherwise rarities in England, like *Ballo in Maschera*, *Idomeneo*, *Alceste*, or unknown treasure like the hilarious *Comte Ory* . . . and unforgettable individual performances. For instance, three *travesti* roles: Kathleen Ferrier as Orfeo and Sena Jurinac as Cherubino and as the Composer in *Ariadne*. Jurinac sings the Countess now in *Figaro* but her *Voi che sapete* was ravishing. And when, in *Ariadne*, she affirms that "*Musik ist eine heilige Kunst*," you need only to hear her to believe it.

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Continued on page 125

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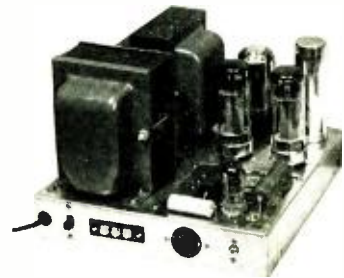
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GLYNDEBOURNE

Continued from page 123

This provided an impetus to other firms and to private individuals. They formed a Festival Society, whose members subscribed in support of each annual opera season. "In any normal year," states the Society's manifesto. "the cost of a Festival will exceed possible box office receipts and it is this margin which the Festival Society has to fill." The important point is that the price of seats has not altered. In return for their support, subscribers are enabled to book in advance of the general public. Only in the Festival-of-Britain year did the State contribute.

The formation of the Society and its generosity allowed for alterations which more than doubled the original capacity of the auditorium and, by enlarging the stage area, increased the range of operas which might be presented.

Subsequently the Glyndebourne Arts Trust was formed "to ensure the future of the Opera in perpetuity by the establishment of an endowment. . . ." The Festival society still exists to give annual support, but the Arts Trust has taken a lease on the opera house, private house, and grounds, and it is responsible financially for Glyndebourne. Stemming from the Trust is a body which is responsible for administering the Opera—the Glyndebourne Executive, with four members including Mr. Christie and Professor Ebert. The economic hazards which lay across the path of Glyndebourne have in this way been circumvented without affecting the artistic continuity.

The motto of the Christie family is *Integer Vitae*. It can as justly be applied to the Glyndebourne Opera.

Visitors to England will find the London Office at 23, Baker Street, W. 1.—telephone Welbeck 0571.



See page 129

part
Beethoven
part...what?

It is one thing to hear a few bars of a sonata—it whets the appetite of the connoisseur and gives him a foretaste of future enjoyment. But to hear half of a complete symphony is more than disappointing.

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- Horn loading—1000 cps cutoff
- Dimensions—8 1/2" x 5 1/2" x 4 1/2"
- Force mass ratio—4 x 10⁷ dynes/gm.

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ELECTROSTATIC

Continued from page 44

are not the best to use in this application. Typically good units for this system are the Bozak B-199A, Bozak B-199AL — used as direct radiators — and the Acoustic Research Model AR-1W. The AR-1W is a driver-and-enclosure, whereas the Bozak must be carefully baffled for proper response. The power response of these woofers falls off evenly above 1,000 cps, and no sharp peaks are present in the response above that point.

When a woofer is used that has a smooth, uniform power response below 1,000 cps and a significantly high or peaky response above that frequency, a rolloff network should be applied to the woofer, with the cut-off frequency at 1,000 cps. Woofers that do not have smooth response to 1,000 cps would require a cut-off filter to suppress the uneven response; another mid-range speaker can be used from this point to 1,000 cps. Such an undertaking may seem complex — in view of the fact that there are good woofers available which cover the whole low range smoothly — but not everyone will want to buy a new woofer.

When a high-efficiency woofer is to be used with an electrostatic tweeter, a juggling of impedance connections plus an adjustment of the attenuator control on the unit will provide the proper balance between the units. Data for making such adjustments can be procured from the tweeters' manufacturers. When a horn woofer (a very high-efficiency woofer) is to be used, an attenuator must be added. Horn woofers usually do not have smooth characteristics in the range from 500 to 1,000 cycles, and another speaker must sometimes be added to such a system to augment response in this range.

Phasing of the woofer and tweeter(s) is of course important due to the gradual nature of the overlap (both units are operating together in the mid-range).

Current American electrostatic tweeters should always be connected directly to the output terminals of the power amplifier. They include their own low-to-high-impedance matching, and have their own built-in crossover network, so they should never be connected to an additional crossover net-

Continued on page 128

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Perhaps... but we have found, quite frankly, that some reputations are not deserved by present production models, and that some manufacturers seem to have forgotten what their reputation came from, and should stand for—quality. Some dealers don't seem to care. We do.

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First, last, and most important of all—the equipment we sell must work... must meet its specifications over years of service. We feel that our reputation and good will rides on any purchase you make with us. This is why we seek out the best. This is why we test and torture it to make sure it will give service. This is why we pass on our findings and our recommendations to you, and back them up, all the way!

Very sincerely,
Irving M. Fried
LECTRONICS



The Brociner Mark 30 C Control Amplifier
We have long maintained in our previous advertising that this is not only the "best buy" in quality preamps, but at least the equal of any unit available, regardless of price. We still think so.

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The usual question is: "Does it work?" The answer is "yes." You can actually hear the difference, particularly on inner grooves. A number of record saving features have been incorporated, making operation safe and easy. We've tried to wear one unit down by constant use in our lab, and we are happy to report that we can't.
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The Dynakit Mark II (50 watt power Amplifier)
(Completely wired and assembled)
Our test laboratory is becoming hard put to find anything to equal, much less surpass this amplifier. Its remarkable stability under actual working conditions, its fabulous power output and frequency characteristics make its price (as a kit, or as a completely wired unit) seem ridiculous.
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The AR-Janszen (Illustrated)
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AR-1 \$185
AR-Janszen \$329
AR-Hegeman \$218.50

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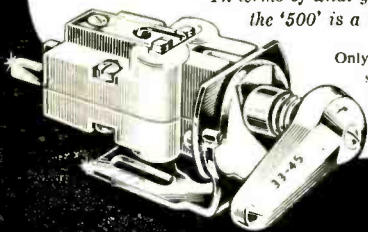
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"In terms of what you receive per dollar spent, the '500' is a noteworthy bargain."



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ELECTROSTATIC

Continued from page 126

work. Any good high fidelity amplifier of recognized quality may be used. For best results a damping factor of 2 or more should be present in the response above 10 kc. This is not too serious, however, since only a slight rolloff will otherwise be present above 10 kc and the transient response will not be affected, because the unit is air damped. Note, however, that a damping factor claimed for an amplifier at some low frequency does not necessarily imply the same value above 10 kc.

Pickup cartridges that exhibit sharp peaks between 7 and 20 kc are not recommended for use with this unit. Units which have a resonance of 20 kc or higher (between the dynamic mass of the stylus and groove wall) are recommended.

The foregoing data applies primarily to the Janszen Model 1-30 electrostatic speaker. At the time of writing of this article, the Pickering version of the electrostatic speaker had not made its commercial appearance. The following comments on the Pickering unit are based on a limited amount of experimental information that has just recently been made available. The author, frankly, has not been able to evaluate the Pickering unit in any way or to learn much about its constructional details. It would be interesting to know what sort of impedance the fixed electrode presents to the propagation of sound. A flat grille, for example, may not be as desirable as round wires, due to its relatively greater interference pattern. The spacing of the elements in each system, together with the chosen value of bias, will affect relative efficiencies. This sort of data will no doubt have to await a future article.

In the Pickering versions of the electrostatic speaker, a small model covers the range from 1,000 cycles upward while a large model covers that from 400 cycles upward. The schematic of the Pickering speaker seems identical to that of the Janszen. It is interesting to note that while the two units are *fundamentally* the same (push-pull structures with bias), different physical embodiments characterize the approach of each manufacturer. The Pickering speaker is a large single-unit sound cell which is gently curved in a horizontal plane to disperse the sound. The Janszen unit

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Not all diamond needles are alike. Nor do all give you true record protection. The difference lies in the inspection. You must be sure of the finish or you have only false security.

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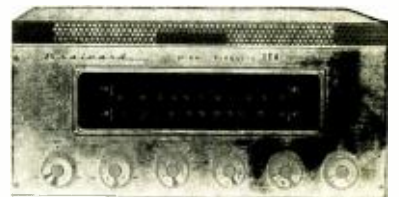
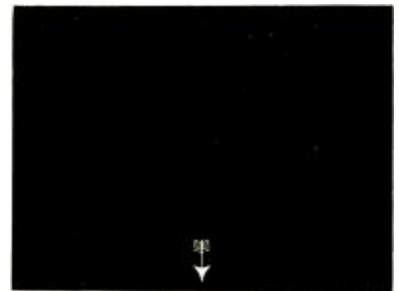
uses four perfectly flat sound cells which are arranged in a pattern to produce a very wide angle of horizontal coverage. It would appear that the latter unit could be expected to give better horizontal distribution while the former should produce slightly better vertical coverage. Generally, listening is done within a relatively narrow vertical angle although it may often be done at very wide horizontal angles. Curvature in both units is therefore concentrated in a horizontal plane. One big difference between the units of the two manufacturers is the handling of back radiation. In the Janszen unit, back radiation is absorbed by acoustic material within the tweeter cabinet. In the Pickering unit, the back is free to radiate and the unit is essentially un baffled. Just how seriously this affects the over-all response is yet to be seen. It can be said, however, that baffling at high frequencies is far less important than at low frequencies. To avoid undue loading of the diaphragm from reflected sound, the unit must be operated at least six inches away from a wall. Unless the rear radiation is needed for sound reinforcement, it would appear to the author that the unit should be operated in front of some heavy drapes which would aid in the absorption of the rear side radiation. Such an arrangement will no doubt cut down the apparent output but should at the same time eliminate the out-of-phase components that might be produced by rear-end reflection from a wall. In the evaluation of the unit, it would seem that the above effect would be a most important one to study.

Another difference between the two designs is their relative size. The Janszen unit is short and deep and has its power supply, crossover unit, and attenuation control in the same cabinet with the sound cells. The unit can be mounted either within or on top of a woofer cabinet. The Pickering unit is tall and thin and has its power supply, crossover network, and attenuation control in a remote box. This unit is designed to stand on top of a woofer cabinet. It might possibly be mounted within a woofer cabinet, although it would occupy an inordinate amount of room especially since a rear protective enclosure would then have to be provided behind the unit. Were it not for the back radiation problem, this speaker might be hung on the wall like a picture!

Continued on next page



See page 131



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 Bozaks start at \$83.85

ELECTROSTATIC

Continued from preceding page

It might be noted that while the designers of these units were confined to using the same basic approach, the selection of electrode spacing and bias are subject to individual choice. For example, if close element spacing is chosen, relatively high efficiency may be realized but costly (precision) manufacture is implied. If the tight spacing requirement is lessened or a lower bias voltage used, poorer efficiency will result but the device will be easier and less expensive to make. To compensate for lower efficiency more diaphragm can simply be supplied, but this makes for a larger structure. Also, a lower efficiency unit means that more audio power must be supplied for a given sound output and with many amplifiers this results in higher operating distortion. The designer's choice is thus a tough one and the old factor of high cost for low distortion rears its ugly head once again.

In comparing the above units for purchase it is of course well to make an AB comparison test under the most favorable conditions possible. The final choice will rest with the individual and what his ears tell him when the same material is fed to both units. If there seems to be little difference, it is well to try several different musical selections that are rich in highs. If still no difference can be discerned, the choice might be made on the basis of physical convenience (the large, thin unit versus the short, deep one) or other limitations of the installation room.

Whichever electrostatic unit is finally chosen, the listening test should convince the discriminating listener that electrostatic speakers are here to stay.

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WHY?

Simply because owning a Weathers FM pickup gives you the lowest stylus force of 1-gram. This 1-gram pressure means much to you. It means that your precious records will not wear out . . . it means that the life of your sapphire is extended thousands of times longer than with conventional pickup . . . it means that your diamond will practically last indefinitely.

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Startling! The clarity, the sweetness . . . the fidelity of the Weathers FM pickup grow on you and stay with you and yes . . . actually spoil you for anything else. . . .

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AUDIO FORUM



SIR:

My speaker system is a three-way one, with crossovers at 800 and 5,000 cycles.

I read in a technical magazine that a lower crossover frequency was better, and I would like to know how to change mine to 400-cycle crossover.

Any information would be appreciated.

Lindsay Taylor
Spokane, Wash.

The crossover frequencies used in three-way systems are not arbitrarily chosen, but must be selected to suit the loudspeaker drivers being used. If a speaker is designed to operate down to 800 cycles, it is likely that it is designed to give rapidly falling response below that frequency, so that no matter how low you choose to make its section of the crossover network, its response will fall off below 800 cycles anyway.

A second reason for not operating a speaker at below its optimum range is that such operation is likely to produce too-violent excursions of the diaphragm, and may distort or tear it.

If you wish to extend your mid-range span to 400 cycles, you should replace the present driver with a unit designed specifically for 400-cycle operation. If it is a compression-type driver, it should be equipped with a horn designed for 400-cycle cutoff.

SIR:

I have a Meissner 8C FM tuner, a Heathkit WA-P2 preamplifier and a Heathkit W-5M amplifier. As you know, both the tuner and preamplifier have volume controls, and the preamplifier has an input level control.

The relationship between these three variables presents a problem. I would appreciate it if you could give me any information as to the proper relative settings of these controls.

Bernard H. Lemlein
Brookline, Mass.

Here is the procedure for setting up the control levels in your system.

Turn all the equipment on, set the front-

panel volume control on the Heath control unit at about the 1 or 2 o'clock position, turn the phono level control all the way down, set the input selector to Phono, and start a record of average volume playing on the turntable.

Bring up the phono level-set control until the music is playing at the volume level at which you are likely to do most of your listening.

Then turn the tuner's volume control and the preamp's Tuner input level-set control all the way off, and flip the Input selector to the tuner, keeping the Heathkit's volume control at its previous setting. Slowly bring up the level-set control until hum or hiss begins to be audible from the tuner. Reduce the level-set to put this noise just below the point of audibility, and bring up the volume control on the tuner until a signal is heard. Tune to a station of average strength, and advance the tuner's volume control until the system is reproducing at about the same level as was the disk record.

Repeat the last steps for any other auxiliary equipment.

SIR:

One detail in your Tested in the Home reports puzzles me.

Regarding some of the control unit reports: the output is often designated as low impedance, whereas the inputs on power amplifiers are always labeled high impedance. The question is, does this difference constitute an impedance mis-match?

Now, a second question. Will any ill-effects result from simultaneously driving one 8-ohm speaker system from the 8-ohm tap of my amplifier, and one 16-ohm speaker system from the 16-ohm tap of the same amplifier?

Dr. R. S. Ball
Brockton, Mass.

All control units are designed to be matched correctly to any high-fidelity power amplifier, all of which have high-impedance inputs. In TITH reports, the statement that a control unit has a low-impedance output simply means that the output impedance is low enough to prevent high-frequency losses in the intercon-

Continued on next page

For middles
...a
DIFFAXIAL



See page 133

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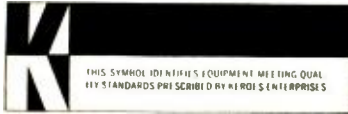
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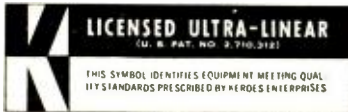
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

necting cable. Such a "low impedance" output will perfectly match the high-impedance input of any power amplifier.

Since you will be operating your speakers in parallel, they should be connected to the 4 and 8-ohm amplifier taps, respectively.

SIR:

What is the technique of placing a stylus on a record so that it will be accurately set for playing an inner band? I am sure that there must be some trick to this, because otherwise exact cuing would be impossible, but I don't know the answer.

Edward H. Marsh
Purcellville
Loudoun County, Va.

"Cuing" in radio stations or recording studios is done by marking the record groove with grease pencil, holding the record with one hand while letting the turntable slip beneath the record, putting the stylus on the proper spot, and releasing the record so that it will turn when the cue is received.

SIR:

My Grommes 55C amplifier produces a persistent high-pitched "ringing." This is audible even at normal levels, and there is, naturally, a momentary "ping" when the case is touched, when a dial is turned, or when a tube is touched.

I have had the amplifier for four months, and I have not had the tubes tested or changed. Would you please tell me how I can eliminate this ringing?

Kenneth Slapin
Norwalk, Conn.

It sounds as if the first 12AX7 pre-amplifier tube in your amplifier is microphonic.

Locate the first 12AX7 tube by turning the selector switch to Tuner, and unplugging and re-inserting each of the miniature tubes until you find one that does not produce a loud pop when you plug it in and out. Then you might try swapping that tube with one of the other 12AX7 tubes. If both of the others prove equally noisy when used in the first stage, you should try a new one in the first 12AX7 socket.

If this does not solve your problem, you had better have your ampli-

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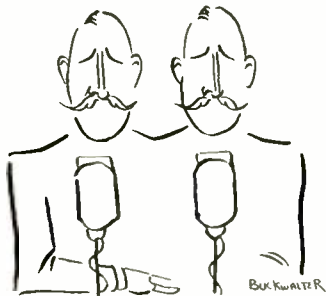
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SIR:

I am interested in mounting my loudspeaker in the plywood paneling of a door which leads into a small room. Would you tell me how I might go about doing this?

Rev. Charles A. Jackson, Jr.
Wynnton Methodist Church
Columbus, Ga.

To install a speaker in the thin panel of a door, cut a hole about three-fourths of an inch less than the diameter of the speaker, and then simply bolt the speaker to it.

Install the speaker cable from the hinged side of the door, so that it will not be stretched by the opening and closing of the door.

SIR:

I have decided that what is called "Doppler distortion" in loudspeakers cannot exist for the following reason: while it is true that a loudspeaker cone might move back and forth a relatively large distance at, say, 40 cycles per second, thereby becoming a moving sound source for a 3,000 cycle tone, the eardrum also becomes a moving sound receiver for the 3,000 cycle tone. It also vibrates at 40 cycles a second.

At a frequency at which the eardrum would not vibrate, perhaps at subsonic pitches, the high-frequency tone might be heard to vary in pitch, but not where the response of the eardrum is linear.

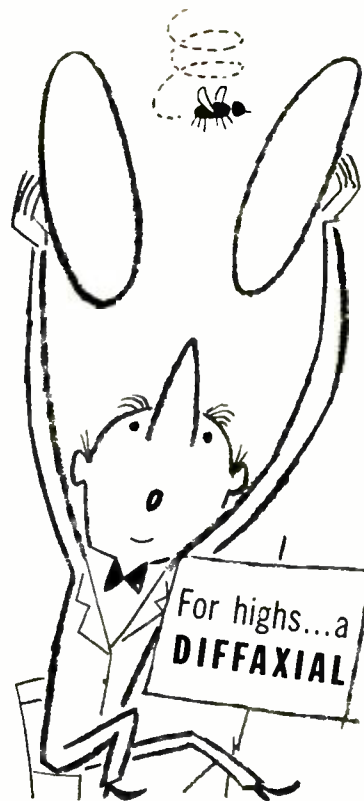
William Devine
Detroit, Mich.

You may have overlooked a couple of important considerations in your comments about the Doppler effect from loudspeakers.

First of all, a speaker cone moves through much greater excursions than does the eardrum, so the modulation effect is likely to be more severe in a speaker than in the ear.

Secondly, regardless of how much Doppler effect the ear itself may introduce, it remains constant at all times, for a signal of given harmonic structure and intensity. But a loudspeaker generates sound in a different manner from that in which an orchestra produces sound. An orchestra does not produce low notes from the same

Continued on page 135



See page 135

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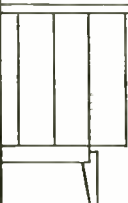
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 133

moving surface which is producing all the high notes. So the fundamental difference in method of sound generation between an orchestra and a single loudspeaker means that the loudspeaker will introduce modulations in the higher frequencies that were not present in the original sound. This of course means that the speaker is introducing distortion, but whether or not this distortion is significant or even detectable to the listener is still a highly debatable point.

SIR:

When tubes are weak, do they glow blue?

A repairman replaced three tubes in my set about four months ago, because they glowed blue. I looked at the amplifier the other day and noticed two glass tubes which are bluish looking from top to bottom.

As far as I can tell, the sound has not been affected by this condition, but I would appreciate it if you could tell me whether I should replace them.

*Jesse Joseph
Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Blue glow in tubes can mean that they have developed an air leak and have lost part of their vacuum (that is, become gassy), but only when the glow is general throughout the entire volume of the bulb, or inside the element structure.

A thin blue glow on the inner surface of the glass bulb, which fluctuates slightly with the signal, however, indicates a good vacuum rather than a poor one. Also, many tubes which are operating at or near their maximum dissipation ratings (as are many power output tubes in present amplifier designs) may show intense spots of blue luminescence inside the element structure. These too are normal, and are not to be taken as a sign of tube defects. In the case of a pair of output tubes, the difference between the amount and nature of glow in them is a pretty good indication of whether one is defective. It is rare that both tubes will become gassy at once, so if one shows intense blue glow around the entire element structure while the other does not, it is good reason for suspecting that it is gassy.

Mercury-vapor rectifiers and voltage regulator tubes should produce a pinkish glow at all times. If they do not, either they are defective or something is wrong with the associated circuits in the amplifier.



See page 137

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STERN

Continued from page 47

dislikes so far as specific composers and works are concerned, he does not declare a special sympathy or aptitude for any particular school or genre of music. "I should be sad to find out that I have an affinity for one kind of music. I'd consider it a limitation. I want to be an amalgam and to be able to give full worth to each musical style." Unlike some American musicians of his generation, he does not carry the torch for contemporary music. He avows no Messianic feeling for the music of our times and has found through experience that "it is unwise to perform music just for the sake of doing one's bit for the 'cause.' Too often works are programmed so that the artist may say he is playing modern music." Stern frankly admits that certain varieties of contemporary music (especially music for the violin) leave him cold, though there are others he likes very much. A Copland sonata was on his opening program in Moscow. As for the staples of the standard repertoire, he finds they do not stale no matter how often he plays them. "There's a reason why these things live and why audiences want to keep on hearing them. It's the mass public, after all, that is the final arbiter of musical worth."

The danger in the "amalgam" approach to art is exemplified in the phrase "jack of all trades and master of none." Sometimes the torch carriers—for whatever cause—are the most interesting and illuminating musicians. Their vision in some areas of music may be blurred or astigmatic, but in others it is thrillingly sharp and revelatory. Stern does not exhibit this apocalyptic insight, but relies instead on technical mastery and musical sobriety. On the concert platform he projects a feeling of solid capability. In a sense, he might be called the musical equivalent of the airplane pilot—a man who can be depended upon to perform his task with calm assurance. There is nothing of the neurasthenic aesthete in his deportment or appearance. Judging from the box office, one must assume that this combination of catholic taste and cool self-assurance is very much to the liking of contemporary audiences. Perhaps, without his realizing it, Isaac Stern is setting a pattern for the American virtuoso of tomorrow.



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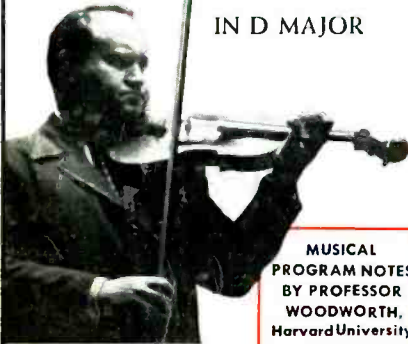
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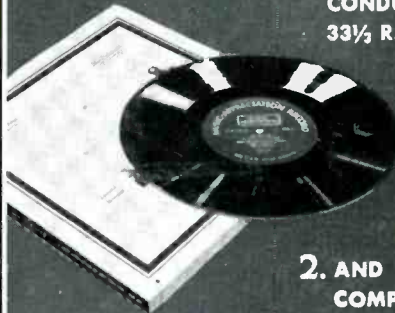
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